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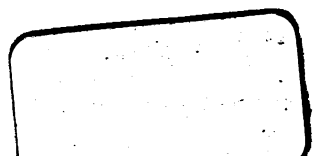
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Parker's letter to Pool

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**A PLAN**  
**FOR THE**  
**GENERAL IMPROVEMENT**  
**OF THE**  
**STATE OF THE POOR**  
**OF**  
**IRELAND.**

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DEDICATED BY PERMISSION  
*To the Right Hon. Robert Peel.*

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It is the province of all Governments, by wise regulations of internal Police, to call forth the greatest possible proportion of Industry, as the best and surest means of producing National Happiness and Prosperity.

COLQUHOUN, *on Indigence.*

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BY WILLIAM PARKER, ESQ.

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CORK:

PRINTED BY EDMOND BARBER, BROWN-STREET;  
For the purpose of contributing by the profits of the Sale,  
towards the establishment of a SCHOOL OF INDUSTRY  
for the Parishes of *Passage and Monkstown.*

---

1816.



290/12P  
TO THE  
**Right Hon. Robert Peel, M. P.**  
**Chief Secretary**

TO THE  
**LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND,**

&c. &c. &c.

**SIR,**

In availing myself of your permission to dedicate the following letters to You, may I be permitted to hope, that as the interesting subject of them, has met your distinguished notice, its policy and urgency will influence You to introduce it to the consideration of the Legislature at an early period of next Session, when I have no doubt that Parliament will readily assent to such plans as You may recommend designed so materially to improve the state of Society in Ireland, and especially of that Class, whose extensive misery should make them the peculiar object of Legislative relief.

I am aware the subject is one of great difficulty, but You have already nobly and I may add undauntedly prepared the way for its favourable reception in Parliament by unreservedly informing that august Body of the miserable condition of the lower orders, of their privations, and of their wants. When You as Minister for Ireland thus manfully come forward, and pronounce positive, though melancholy truths, with a mind that so sensibly feels the extent of human woe, may we not anticipate the most pleasing results from your energy and exertions, should a comprehensive plan be submitted to your wisdom for removing the largest portion of the present distress.

That which is contained in these letters, is of an extensive, though of a novel nature. While its principal object is the relief of the Poor, it embraces in a variety of views, the general improvement of the Country, and is likely under your protection to give a stimulus to its Industry, to invigorate its Commerce and Agriculture, and while it has a tendency to check improvidence and vice, it is probable that it will restore to many of the late disturbed districts, the comforts that must arise from their population engaging hereafter in pursuits the reverse of those that have so unfortunately occupied their attention. Independently of these important considerations,

this plan contains a mode of improving the Excise  
Revenue of Ireland, and of completely checking  
the abuses that exist in many of its branches.

I have the honour to be,

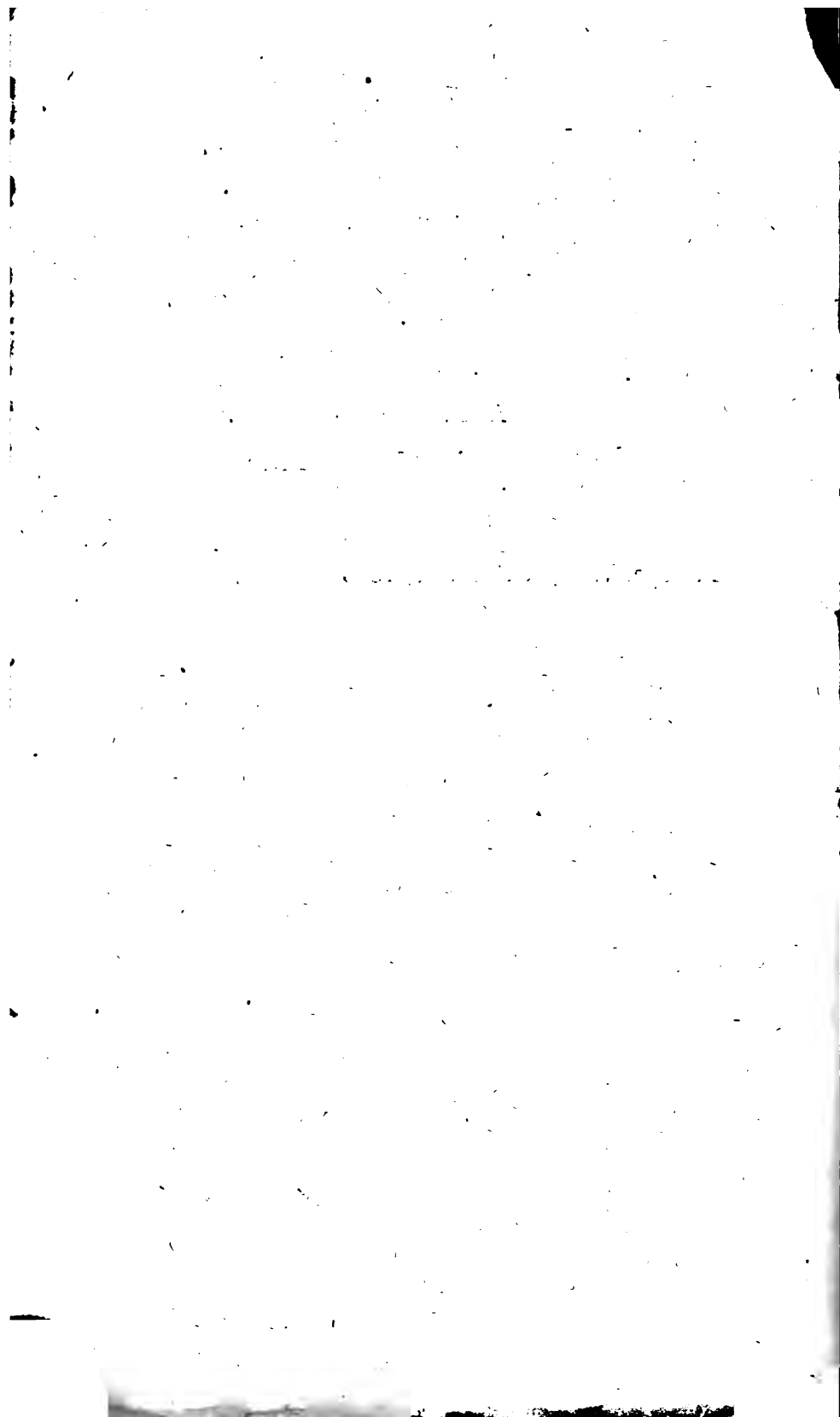
SIR,

Your most obedient,

And very humble Servant,

**WILLIAM PARKER.**

Passage, West, October 20, 1816.



## ADVERTISEMENT.

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*THE favourable reception which the Observations on the IRISH GRAND JURY LAWS, met with from the Legislature and the Public, induces the Writer of them, to re-publish the Letters on the subject of the Poor, that have appeared in the CORK ADVERTISER, signed, "A True Friend to Ireland," which the Editor of that patriotic print, did him the favour to insert.*

*The circumstance of these Letters re-appearing before the Public, under the influence of a dedication to Mr. PEEL, must attract more general notice, as it implies an inclination on his part, not to disregard the exertions of an Individual, desirous in these times of general distress, to contribute his mite towards relieving it.*

*As these Letters have met the approbation of many distinguished and benevolent persons,*

## VIII.

*capable of feeling for human misery, the Writer humbly hopes, that under the sanction of a liberal, patriotic and energetic Government, the amelioration of the state of the lower orders, will be among the first objects taken into consideration the ensuing Session of Parliament.*

*Through the humanity of their Lordships, the Post Masters General, this Pamphlet designed solely for the improvement of the Country, and the relief of the Poor, has been permitted to be circulated through the Post Offices of Ireland; and this permission has been more readily obtained, as any pecuniary benefit resulting from the Publication, is intended to be appropriated towards establishing a temporary SCHOOL OF INDUSTRY for the Parishes of Passage and Monkstown, where near Two-hundred Poor Persons are almost destitute of employment, or even the means of existence.*



# **PARISHES**

**OF**

***PASSAGE AND MONKSTOWN.***

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These Parishes situated on the Western side of Cork Harbour, have probably suffered more severely than other parts from the effects of Peace. During the War, the extensive Fleets which resorted to Cork for Convoy, brought a vast concourse of Strangers to this Port, who afforded extensive employment to the numerous Poor. These resources have nearly failed, therefore a great many families have been reduced to a state of the greatest distress. Those evils have been aggravated by the extreme difficulty of the Poor, procuring employment as agricultural labourers, or by work on the public roads, while their numerous Children are in a wretched state of hunger, nakedness, and destitution. Therefore under such circumstances, it has been deemed most advisable to endeavour to establish a School of Industry,

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where maintenance, education and employment may be advantageously combined.

Such benevolent Persons as may be pleased to countenance this proposed Institution, for which no expense is at present required in Buildings, the Bathing Concerns at Passage being voluntary offered for the purpose, until the Legislature establish the Rural Asylums,) will be so kind as to forward their donations to Mrs. STAMERS, the Reverend RICHARD LLOYD, or the Reverend CHARLES M'CARTHY, Passage West, to HENRY FORTESCUE, Esq. Post Office or PETER BESNARD, Esq. Inspector General of Linens Cork.

**FIRST LETTER,**  
**ON THE SUBJECT OF THE**  
**POOR OF IRELAND.**

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*A brief View of the State of Indigence in Ireland.—  
Deficiency of Legislative provision.—Expectations that the  
Legislature will inquire into the State of the Poor.—Poor  
Rates and Laws in England injurious to the morals and  
industry of the lower Orders.—The concerns of the Poor  
deserving the attention of the higher Classes of Society.—  
Prospect of their amelioration.*

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**TO THE EDITOR OF THE**  
**CORK ADVERTISER.**

**SIR,**

The general circulation of your patriotic print, and the deserved estimation it is held in by the public, and more particularly the attention that is paid to its columns by numerous Members of the Legislature, induce a warm friend to Ireland to solicit your insertion of a plan for the general relief of the Poor of this his native country, particularly as he is aware from experience that no communication comes in so general, or in

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so acceptable a form, as through the medium of a respectable Newspaper, which makes the Press so essentially useful to the welfare of society, and the promotion of the best interests of mankind.

It most unfortunately requires few preliminary observations to prove, that the distress of our Poor is not ideal, for Ireland abounds with an immense accumulation of the most heart breaking extensive woe, that ever afflicted any Christian country.

Private benevolence has rendered the most important benefits to our Charitable Institutions, in which the City of Cork so laudably abounds, but notwithstanding this spirit of philanthropy, not confined to one particular place, but extending its healing influence to every part of the Island, "who will venture to assert that irremediable poverty together with the helplessness of sickness, infancy, and old age, can be safely left in a large and fully peopled community to the care of that spontaneous charity, on which they must devolve in the absence of all legislative provision?"\*

That there is nearly a total absence of all legislative provision for our Poor must be admitted, and this great defect in our laws, stimulates the writer to endeavour to attract the notice of Parliament to this highly important object; for

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\* Quarterly Review, October 1814, Page 147.

he is perfectly satisfied, that the Legislature only requires positive information to ground an immediate inquiry into the general state of the Poor of Ireland. Happy will the writer of this letter be, and amply rewarded for the time and attention he has bestowed on the subject, if his humble labours should afford one useful suggestion for improving the situation of the Poor, through the powerful means of the most liberal, patriotic and enlightened Legislature, that ever directed the Councils of this great nation. To this Legislature, pre-eminent in power and honour, the writer most humbly appeals, entreating their minute attention to this highly interesting subject, which he hopes they will discuss in the present Session of Parliament, and not suffer in an integral part of the British Empire, such a mass of distress to exist without adopting some energetic means to effectually relieve it, and which means are certainly not unattainable.

The writer deprecates the present system of managing the Poor Rates and Poor Laws in England, which have been stated by Foreign writers, as "the most destructive gangrene of our Constitution." Law suits, frauds and jobbing have most shamefully destroyed the funds raised in England, which should be for the sole support of the Poor, and to the disgrace of the Overseers in the Sister Country, gluttony and inebriety have

too often absorbed the taxes that should solely be appropriated to the most benevolent uses. The reports of the Committee of the House of Commons on the general state of the Poor in England, and the valuable report of the Society for bettering the condition of the Poor, fully prove the truth of this statement. Such examples before our eyes, and the notorious ill effects which have attended the mismanagement of the British Poor, should amply warn the cautious but zealous friends of humanity in Ireland, to avoid the rocks on which the English system has split.

The writer's plan for ameliorating the condition of the lower orders in Ireland, is to introduce "Industry where there is ability, and by affording kind protection where that is wanting;" for when we arrive at a tolerable state of perfection in this science, we shall connect and bind the higher and lower ranks of society, in a manner that must set at defiance every attempt to continue and foster in this unhappy and divided country, the destructive habits of the turbulent and seditious. By the higher ranks and well informed taking a more general and lively interest in the concerns of the poor and uninformed, the latter will naturally get more attached to the former, and look up to them as their friends and protectors, not viewing them as they now actually do in an envious, jealous and suspicious light. To effect this happy change in society in

Ireland necessarily requires the powerful influence of example, and it is no small satisfaction to find that this daily occurs. In this enlightened age, man is taught to look on his fellow man as a brother, the child of one common parent—such were the original ideas of the creation, and such were the benign tenets of the christian doctrine. In this view of *human nature* all Governments and all societies should act; and we see annually in the Imperial Legislature, that such sentiments guide their decisions and animate their Councils. Therefore under this auspicious impression, it will not be chimerical to hope for the realization of a general system for the relief of the Irish Poor.

The writer does not presume to assert that what he is going to submit is absolutely efficacious, but its practicability has been admitted by several highly informed persons in both countries, who have honoured him with their valuable correspondence, and who like him have felt a warm anxiety for promoting the best interests of the Poor.

The subject is unfortunately too copious and too interesting, to admit any admixture of brevity. The Legislature are most peculiarly bound to exert themselves on this most important subject, and not allow their humanity to be called in question, by the total absence of all legislative relief for the Poor of Ireland. The magnitude of the object and its probable expense, should not

deter them even in these times of economy, from promoting a general system of effectual benevolence, unconnected with party views, and party purposes, through the Empire.\* They should endeavour to make the Poor instrumental to their own relief through the affluence of the wealthy, the humanity of the charitable, and by a system of taxation for this laudable purpose, that would not affect struggling industry, or appal the exertions of the resident Gentry, who are the best prop of the Country, and who have generally manifested the most effective loyalty to the King and Constitution; the numerous poor of our distressed Country, may thus be placed in a gradual state of amelioration, and be imperceptibly attached to habits of peace and industry. The best safety of the State and the permanent prosperity of the people, consists in the attachment of the lower orders of Society, towards the Constitution and Government. When this system of regard to the concerns of the Poor, emanating from Parliament, shall be in operation, there will be no longer the necessity, that unfortunately now exists, of maintaining so large a Military Force, which is admitted by its patriotic supporters, to be offensive to the best principles of the British Constitution, and to be solely countenanced by urgent necessity. Admit this necessity and the same reason exists for its progressive



removal, which can only be effected by the laudable attention of the Legislature, to the immediate and pressing distress of the unemployed and starving Poor of Ireland, whose neglected state is capable of great improvement by the united exertions of the Legislature and the Country.

I am,

SIR,

Your obedient Servant,

A TRUE FRIEND TO IRELAND.

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## SECOND LETTER,

ON THE SUBJECT OF THE

# POOR OF IRELAND.

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*The distress in our Streets a disgrace to Christianity.—Primitive Institution of Tithes.—One object they were intended for, disregarded in Ireland, though not always so in England.—Restitution to the Poor necessary ; at present only prospective.—The Sick and Poor the peculiar care of the Clergy.—Friendly visits by Clergymen among their Flocks recommended, consequences of neglect injurious to the Established Religion.—The general superintendence of the Poor by the Clergy in the proposed Asylums suggested.*

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE  
CORK ADVERTISER.

SIR,

It is obvious to every person possessing the least reflection, that the distress apparent in our streets and highways is almost a disgrace to a nation professing the principles of the Christian Religion, the primary injunctions of which are, that we should consider all men as our neighbours, and that we should love our neighbour as our-

selves. But is this love to be found? Those who are well experienced in human misery must deny its general existence, as it is only to be met with in the admonitions of the preacher or elucidated in the conduct of a few of our Divines, who follow that exemplary course in private life, which they so feelingly inculcate in public, and who consider *well disposed Charity*, as the greatest proof of their faith, and the best doctrine of the Apostles.\*

In the earliest ages of the history of Religion, Tithes were appropriated by mankind, not only for the just support of the Clergy, but also for the support of the Poor,† who were committed to their peculiar care, and who looked up to them, not only as their spiritual advisers, but as their fathers, their natural and legal protectors. But to whom in Ireland can the Poor look up to in their distress, for legal and effectual relief? To none. The law has not devised any course by which industrious merit can be fostered in its

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\* The Honourable and Reverend LUNLOW TONSON, in a most impressive Sermon, preached on Sunday the 25th August 1816, in St. Peter's Church, Cork, for the benefit of the Cork Dispensary and Humane Society, emphatically enforced this benevolent principle of Christian Faith.—His text was selected from the 2nd Verse of the 8th Chapter of Mark. "*I have compassion on the multitude.*"

† Among the Jews, the Mosaic Law allotted a portion of Tithes for the Strangers, the Fatherless, and the Widows.

difficulties, or abject poverty be relieved in its distress. A certain portion of Tithes were appointed by the wisdom of our ancestors, for this laudable purpose, and placed in a great measure at the disposal of the Clergy, but it is feared some of these Tithes, intended for the relief of the Poor, have been enjoyed exclusively by the Church, though the Tithes of some Parishes in England, are solely appropriated to this object, and the Clergy only derive the Vicarial or small Tithes. As the subject of Tithes is under the consideration of the House of Commons; they will no doubt consider how far the rights of the Poor have been duly protected; or whether some instances have not occurred, where Tithes intended for the Poor, as well as the Clergy, have not been entirely absorbed by the latter.—Retrospective inquiries are often attended with trouble and perplexity. But probably in some instances these inquiries may be necessary, as Tithes, like Charitable Legacies, from the apathy too prevalent in all public affairs in Ireland, may have afforded the source, by which many lived in luxury, while the Poor were totally excluded from the benefit of these Funds

If the Tithes of any Parishes in Ireland have been appropriated to the benefit of the Poor, it is fit, that they should again become their property.

But this resource for the Poor can only be prospective, and is submitted at this crisis, when Parliament is engaged on the subject of amending the Tithe system ; and its future operation if ever acted on, must naturally be slow, and progressive, as ancient establishments if founded in equity and justice, should not be hastily subject to innovation. As this measure is simply intended to be prospective, the Clergy can find no jealousy at its being suggested, and their Reverend Body will not oppose a measure emanating from pure charity, which Religion teaches them to practise.

Let not the Clergy think that the Writer would wish to see them deprived of their just rights. No ; his wish is to see them adequately remunerated for duties of the most important nature to Society, which duties, however, should be adequately performed.

Of those duties the care of the sick and poor are peculiarly assigned to the Clergy, but it is much to be regretted that in some instances, they do not, unless when called on, or urged to it by representation, generally attend to the concerns of the poor, with that zeal which they so powerfully inculcate. And from this cause, it is lamentable to observe, so many of the poor become seceders from the Established Church, and submit to be the dupes of ignorance and superstition.

Frequent friendly visits paid by Clergymen among the Families of the Poor would have the happiest effects, and, with prudent admonitions, would effectually render nugatory the unceasing attempt of the avowed enemies of the Established Religion, who through the agency chiefly of bigoted females, work on the weakness of the lower classes of society, who feeling themselves too much slighted yield at last to the importunities with which they are assailed. Every Parish in Ireland affords almost constant instances of this practice.

Thus much has been urged respecting the Poor in Ireland, as connected with the Clergy of the Established Church, because it will be hereafter submitted that they should be bound to take the most active part in ameliorating the condition of the Poor, and that they should not confine their conduct to their words, but extend it to active deeds of general superintendence as daily visitors, and governors of the Baronial or Parochial Asylums, intended to be proposed in such districts as may be so unfortunate as to possess a great number of Poor, incapable of their own efficient support, or who may be without ostensible relations or friends, able and willing to maintain them.

The outlines of these establishments shall be submitted to the Public through the favor of

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your next publication.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

**A TRUE FRIEND TO IRELAND.**



# THIRD LETTER,

## ON THE SUBJECT OF THE POOR OF IRELAND.

*Public meetings often biased by interested individuals.—Funds of public Institutions in Cork perverted.—Inquiry instituted into them.—A Parliamentary Commission probably necessary.—Public delinquents escape Justice, through the improper misconception of the character of an Informer, this apprehension the cause of public plunder.—Reasons which induce the Writer to allude to this subject.—Mendicity the parent of numerous evils in Ireland.—The abolition of mendicity the object of the writer's exertions.—Essential good may be anticipated to Ireland from Mr. Peel's conduct in Parliament.—Disposition of the Irish.—Superabundant population caused by improvident Marriages among the labouring Poor.—Parliamentary interference to check this evil, probably necessary.—System of middle Men in Ireland the cause of oppression.—Necessity of an alteration.—County of Cork Grand Jury desirous of establishing a County Penitentiary.—Penitentiaries necessarily connected with the Asylums.—Plan of the Asylums.*

*First.—Asylums for the Indigent.*

*Secondly.—Asylums for Orphans and Foundling Children.*

*Thirdly.—The local Dispensaries as far as circumstances admit, to be connected with those Asylums.*

*Fourthly.—Work Houses to be attached to them.*

*Fifthly.—Separate apartments and ground for Females*



*—Ladies of rank and intelligence often the promoters of the best Charities.—Advantage to the superior orders of the Fair Sex in such pursuits.—Want of room in Work Houses in Cities and Towns prejudicial to morality.*

*Sixthly.—Bridewells necessary in each Barony.—The Asylums convenient for their erection.—Pounds for Cattle also may be united to the Asylums.—Their present insufficiency in Ireland admitted.—One of the Barony Constables to reside at the Asylums.*

*Seventhly.—A Committee Room of sufficient extent for weekly Magisterial Courts, and other public meetings necessary.*

*Eighthly.—A saving Bank recommended at each Asylum, with loans on deposit to the Poor,*

*Ninthly.—Friendly or Benefit Societies also suggested.—Great care necessary in their arrangements and management.*

*Tenthly.—Weekly payments to poor Room-keepers recommended.—Plan of Trustees, Visitors, Committee and Officers suggested.—The Clergyman of each Parish to act as a remunerated Superintendent.—Medical attendant as Deputy.—General observations.*

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## TO THE EDITOR OF THE CORK ADVERTISER.

SIR,

No limited or partial scale for the relief of the Poor in Ireland, would be suitable to the distress that so generally prevails.

You have well observed in your columns, that

“many of the noble Institutions for public education, many of the generous gifts of wise patriotic men, have been, and are shamefully abused.” Does not this abuse mainly arise, from the too prevailing apathy on all public affairs, and too many of our Public Meetings being biased by the partial opinions or interested motives, of a few Individuals. If defects have existed in the laws for pursuing such inquiries with vigour, Parliament in its wisdom will no doubt appoint a commission minutely to investigate the subject, and relieve as much as possible all private persons from the odium of an informer, and from the unjust suspicion of malice. These sentiments greatly retard the progress of truth, justice, and equity in Ireland; for we daily see notorious public delinquents if brought to justice, escape through deficiency of evidence and want of energy in their prosecutions, and hence some instances may be adduced of professed rogues fattening on the plunder of the public.

But it may be asked what relation do these remarks bear to the introduction of Baronial or Parochial Asylums, as suggested in the second Letter in the ADVERTISER? The analogy on reflection will be evident, because it may be urged that those Institutions would only lead to future frauds and jobbing. Moreover, the apprehension of such evils, may deter the Legislature from

countenancing such extensive plans for the relief of the Poor as shall be now submitted, and may check every attempt towards their general amelioration. but to remove those difficulties, it is the intention of the writer to suggest such restrictions on the conduct of the Trustees, on the management of the Committees, and on the superintendence of the proper officiating persons as shall tend totally to check, if not to remove, even a suspicion of general neglect or fraud. With these prefatory observations, the plan of those Rural Asylums is now submitted.

Let those acquainted with the prevailing Mendicity in the Streets of any of our Towns inquire, and they will find that the Beggars that are mostly met with, have flocked in from various parts of the Country, and that the Town Beggars *vice versa* emigrate from their native residence, and infest the Roads or Villages. This change of persons, leads to gross imposition on the public, if not to the numerous thefts so constantly committing. Besides, those itinerant Beggars, in the time of public disturbance, have proved the most active and efficient agents of rebellion and sedition.

The total stop to Mendicity in Ireland is the main object of the writer's exertions, because he is satisfied, if this evil were effectually removed, the greatest good in a moral and political sense

would be effected for the Country. That it is practicable, there can be no doubt, and the accomplishment of this object "would give a degree of vigour to the body politic, far surpassing that which can result from some other pursuits and speculations."

Mr. PEEL to whom Ireland is so much indebted for his persevering zeal in her behalf, acknowledged that "*in Ireland there was a large and active population without adequate means of employment—a population to whose industry it was impossible to give that direction, upon which the peace, and tranquillity of every Country must mainly depend.*" Is not this declaration of Mr. PEEL in Parliament A TRUTH of the most serious import, and a subject deserving the deepest consideration of the Legislature? But it is lamentable to observe that the existing apathy of the Irish Gentry, checks every public inquiry into the real state of the Country. Ireland, unfortunately, has had sufficient experience to take warning for the future, from her past afflictions. It would appear, however, that Mr. PEEL's language in the House of Commons was to be disregarded, and to pass away like other evanescent remarks, and that we were to slumber at our ease, and not to awake from our sloth, until the approaching winter brought murder, robberies, and ruin, to our homes. The historians who

have treated of the manners of the lower Irish, have stated "that they are instinctively brave, thoughtlessly generous," and Sir WILLIAM PETER has said that they disregard death in all its terrors. If the truth of this character of the Irish is admitted, and that it will be admitted by every person of experience there can be no doubt, have not the public a right to look forward with apprehension for the evils that may approach?

"Extreme indigence and misery, with a state of barbarity, are universally followed by turbulence and ferocity. Men who have nothing but life to lose, are always found to hazard it upon slight occasions. Existence is only valued in proportion to its enjoyments; and men, whose lives are too miserable to be worth much to their owners, are little disposed to set a value upon the lives of others. Where home affords no enjoyments, the abandonment of home causes no regret; and the slightest incentive suffices to throw the inmates into movement and enterprize."

"Indigence, barbarity, ferocity—little value for their own lives, less for the lives of others—little respect for property, in which they can hardly be said to have any share—a disposition to movement and enterprize, and yet a tendency to sloth, may be considered as the general characteristics of human nature in the very lowest state of improvement; and can scarcely be denied to

compose, at this moment, a true picture of the Irish population. The political consequences are unavoidable ;—a country without a surplus produce, and governed by the sword ;—to the empire at large, not a support, but a burthen ; and not merely a burthen ; but a terror—the source of her fears and her danger ”

“Mr. Tighe says in his survey of Kilkenny”—

“Scantily supplied with potatoes ; clothed with rags ; famished with cold in their comfortless habitations, the people cannot, though frugal, sober and laborious, (which from my own knowledge I assert), provide against infirmity and old age, with any other resource than begging or dependence. None can tell better than the members of the charitable societies here, what numbers of miserable objects depend on the distribution of their bounty for existence, and how inadequate language is to convey a just idea of their poverty and suffering. These statements may be applied, more or less, to all parts of the country. The habitations of cotters are generally wretched.”\*

We should at this time adopt the practical and prophetic wisdom of SWIFT, which was “remedial for the present warning for the future,” and instead of praying for his blessing to Ireland, we should in *due season* endeavour to arrest the dreadful necessity of that blessing, which was, ironical-

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\* Edinburgh Review, vol. 21, pages 313 & 355.

ly speaking, "that Ireland should be visited with a septennial plague to rid it of its superabundant population." Of this superabundant population, improvident marriages among the labouring poor, and the abominable system of middle Men, which so grinds them down, are the two chief causes. The Legislature in its wisdom may adopt some prudent mode of checking improvident marriages among the poor, and the good sense of the Lords paramount of the Soil, may ultimately operate to destroy the pernicious class of middle Men, by giving due encouragement to a respectable resident Tenantry, who should cultivate the soil on the same wise system as is done in England, and sufficiently employ the poor, who, instead of farming for themselves, and struggling against impossibilities, as in this Country, are fostered by their employers, who are their friends and protectors, and who take as great a pride in their domestic comforts, as they do in the general prosperous state of their Agricultural economy. The checking of mendicity in this Country, has been already an object of attention of one of our County Grand Juries, who made a fruitless application to Government, for the means of establishing a General Penitentiary and Work House in this great County. They were referred to an Act of Parliament, that passed in the 50th Year of Geo. 3, Chap. 103, Sect. 3,\* empowering

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\* And be it enacted, that all and every the expense of

**Counties to arrange the establishment of those Institutions, without clearly devising the sources from whence the funds were to be raised. Thus have Acts of Parliament passed, and the Legis-**

**Building, Purchasing, Procuring, Altering, Enlarging, and Repairing the Marshalsea of the Four Courts in Dublin, and all and every Penitentiary House or Houses in Ireland, shall be discharged, and all and every Rent payable for or in respect thereof, or of the Ground or Appurtenances thereof respectively, shall be paid out of the consolidated Fund of Ireland, and the said expenses of all County Prisons, whether Gaols, Bridewells, Houses of Correction, Sheriffs Prisons, or otherwise, shall be defrayed by the respective Counties, Counties of Cities, or Counties of Towns, by presentments on the said Counties, Counties of Cities, or Counties of Towns, to be made by the Grand Juries thereof respectively, to wit, in the County of Dublin, and County of the City of Dublin, at the presenting Terms, and in the other Counties, Counties of Cities, and Counties of Towns, at their respective Assizes, same as hereinafter particularly mentioned.**

The writer is informed, that the County of Cork Grand Jury, construed this Section into the intention that the Legislature meant, that Penitentiaries should be established in each County, and built out of the public Revenues. But on further inquiry, this has not been the construction of the Act, and national Penitentiaries are unknown in any other part of Ireland except Dublin, where one has been established under the authority of a Local Act. Had the Gaol Act defined the mode of obtaining the money from the consolidated Fund, no impediment would have existed to the establishment of those highly necessary Institutions, which should be in the Country, and not attached to the County Gaols in Cities or Towns.



lature been engaged on objects of no real utility. The real good the Grand Jury of this County had in contemplation, would be attended with the happiest effects to society, had their laudable endeavours elicited at that time, the countenance of Government. But the subsequent Grand Juries have declined acting on this subject as if their further exertions would be useless.

Sufficient has been shown to prove the actual necessity of the establishment of those Penitentiaries and Work Houses in every County for notorious offenders, who would require a more vigilant and strict superintendence, than would be requisite in the Rural Asylums now suggested, and such persons as were habitually profligate in their conduct, should be sent from the Rural Asylum to the General County Penitentiary, where convicted felons should be profitably employed in industrious pursuits, instead of continuing the present most impolitic system of Transportation, which is so expensive to the nation, and which has been and continues a notorious instigation to the commitment of numerous thefts. With respect to these Penitentiaries as proposed by our County Grand Jury, another opportunity shall be taken to elucidate the necessity of their establishment, and the writer now states that it is expedient ;—

First—That Asylums for the really indigent, old, infirm, lame, blind, deaf, and dumb, should

be established in every large Parish, or County of a City or Town, where the number of such Poor Persons should amount to One-hundred or upwards; that smaller Parishes should be united, or that the system should extend to entire Baronies, according as the Assizes Grand Juries in their judgment should deem fit.

Secondly—That to these Institutions should be attached Asylums for Orphan and Foundling Children, who should be brought up to industrious pursuits, and receive the benefits of a suitable education. Experience proves every day, the truly deplorable state of the rising generation of the poor, and the terrible instances of infanticide daily committing in every county in Ireland. At the same time when these Asylums should be the permanent relief to the unfortunate innocents, admitted to future prospects of being an honor to the state and a blessing to the nation which has humanely provided for their destitute condition, all the children of the actual neighbouring poor, should be admitted to the schools at the Asylums on the payment of the small sum of three pence per month, in order to remove the improper feeling that exists, against any system of charitable education; and the apprehension that these establishments, from such foolish prejudices, would not be generally resorted to by the children of the industrious poor.

Proper Schoolmasters and Mistresses selected by the Society for Promoting Education in Ireland, should be sent to those Institutions, or from England as future circumstances may render eligible.

Such poor children whose parents lived at any distance from the Asylum, should get a meal each day, with the other children, as the Committee may appoint, and a suit of clothes should be given to each deserving Child annually, the week before Christmas, as an inducement to good conduct and cleanliness.

The subject of education is so materially connected with the prosperity and civilization of the country, that the writer fears its introduction may be an object of jealousy to some, if comprehended in this plan for improving the condition of the poor. To remove every cause of objection the writer cannot do a more essential service than to refer to the fourteenth report of the Commissioners of the Board of Education, where they liberally state. "We have applied our efforts to the framing of a system which, whilst it shall afford the opportunities of education to every description of the lower classes of the people, may, at the same time, by keeping clear of all interference with the particular religious tenets of any, induce the whole to receive its benefits *as an individual body, under one and the same system,*

*and in the same establishments."* After this declaration of that useful and respectable body, no religious sects need be alarmed, that their doctrines are likely to be invaded in the progress of the national institutions now suggested.

That able work, the Edinburgh Review, in the 214th page of the 21st vol. has remarked, "it should always be remembered, that teaching the elements of literature, and teaching the elements of religion, are two different things; that they really have no more connexion, than any other two branches of education whatsoever, and that upon the principle of the division of labour, there is an obvious advantage in teaching them asunder." In this view the writer cordially coincides, and the same system of religious instruction now adopted in our prisons, may be wisely introduced into these institutions, for great pains should be taken, to make those children acquainted with the leading principles of religion and morality, and with the peculiar duties of those useful, though humble stations in life which it will probably be their lot to fill. But in saying thus far, let it not be understood, that any peculiar doctrine offensive to any religious sect, should be countenanced in these institutions, their religious education should be founded on the broad and immutable basis of duty towards God, and duty towards man. Let true religion be practised only, and the effects

emanating from this constant practice will dissipate the gloom of superstition, the horrors of ignorance and prejudice, and supplant those enemies of religious peace, with the happy effects of pure Christian Piety.

Unhappily the *ignorance* of Irishmen, and its consequences have largely added to their deplorable and degraded State. For it is an admitted axiom "that the *ignorance* of a people, and its attendant evils, are the natural fruit of poverty and degradation. In the natural order of things ignorance is an *effect* of misery before it is a *cause*. Place any race of men in comfortable circumstances, and dependent, for their comfortable circumstances, upon their own works alone, and they will seek knowledge as the eye seeks for light. As soon as you make the Irish happy, you will remove the effects of superstition. Nothing is so effectual as the enjoyments of the present life for weakening the influence of those, who pretend to a power over the character of a future one. Never yet was a very comfortable people found, to be a very superstitious one; never was a very wretched one found to be otherwise."

The writer has taken the liberty, in quoting the above forcible passage from the Edinburgh Review, to change a few words to make it more suitable to the subject. Its truth must make a deep impression on the readers of this treatise

for unless we endeavour to enlighten our population, we can never make them happy. Ignorance and idleness are among the numerous causes of the degradation of the Irish. If ignorance did not so much prevail we should not daily witness the evils of the superstition of the lower orders, and the serious consequences resulting to Society from the number of holidays still kept in Ireland, and which unfortunately mostly occur in the Spring of the Year, when agricultural employment is so much required. The religious purposes for which those holidays were originally intended have been completely perverted in their use, and instead of promoting the cause of religion, they mainly tend to debase it. The mornings of the lower orders are spent in a Chapel listening to a language understood only by the Clergy, and the rest of the day in public houses, where the earnings of an entire week are expended by the unfortunate peasantry in drunkenness. The following day is too often spent in drowsiness, and weariness, while their families are reduced to the most poignant distress. From this practice the writer has known the most injurious effects to result to the labouring poor. He has known public houses full of those thoughtless beings on holidays, and their families destitute of the means of providing food. Thus has the character of religion been degraded through

many parts of Ireland.

The Edinburgh Reviewers have, page 363, vol. 21, further remarked, that "under the pressure of the circumstances which now tend to corrupt and debase the population of Ireland, we cannot flatter ourselves that the effects of artificial education would be very conspicuous. If the force of these circumstances was broken, artificial education would accelerate the progress of cure. But if the unhappy circumstances of that people have overcome the still more important faculties of speech, and of reason, and have rendered them almost an useless possession, what can we expect from the comparatively feeble endowments of reading and writing? Not that we think any exertion should be forborne to promote these acquirements. They are always something gained; and when the time arrives (which, sooner or later, must arrive,) when the chains which bind Ireland from improving shall be taken away, the faculties of reading and writing will then be of primary importance; they are essential to the right exercise of the elective franchise, and, with a due knowledge of the nature of the art, should be rendered indispensable."

In coinciding with these sentiments the writer asserts that however laudably directed the measures of the Legislature have been to promote education among the poor, these have been compa-

wholly by the Parish."

The Church of Scotland has effectually adopted a similar system in that Country, but unfortunately if ever acted on in Ireland it has become obsolete. The writer does not desire that the Irish language should be the national language of Ireland, but he thinks a more extended knowledge of it, may lead to the more general knowledge of English, and without this contemporaneous assistance the proposed improvement in education would be nugatory.

Mr. PŒL in his patriotic speech in the House of Commons, stated that *"real substantial and permanent reform, however, among the lower classes could be looked for only from the general diffusion of knowledge, and from enlightening their minds. From such sources of reform he should anticipate the grandest and the noblest results. He could state a fact within his own knowledge, that the greatest eagerness and desire prevailed among the lower orders for the benefits of instruction; and he regarded it as the imperious duty of every one, even in these times of general economy, not to obstruct the progress or the limits of education, which ought to be as generally and as widely diffused as possible."* That the people are disposed to learn admits of no doubt, but it has been shown that poverty and superstition retard the progress of knowledge. When the Government endeavour



to make the people more comfortable in their circumstances, and succeed therein, of which there can be no doubt, "they will then seek knowledge as the eye seeks for light," but hunger, nakedness, and cold, are bad stimulants to learning. The dreary hovels of the Peasantry, destitute of every comfort, should be visited by the members of the legislature, to convince them of this fact, as melancholy and as true as Mr. PHEL's statement in Parliament.

Thirdly.—The local Dispensaries, so humanely introduced by Sir JOHN NEWPORT, should be united as far as circumstances will admit, to these Institutions, of which the Medical Attendant should be one of the acting Committee, and one of the daily Superintendents. He should always reside at the Institutions, and have a suitable responsibility attached to him. He should moreover be bound to practice Vaccination more generally through his district, and means should be adopted to act by persuasion, and not by force to oblige the parents of poor children to have them inoculated in due time, and not have so many poor innocents untimely sacrificed to the prejudice and ignorance of their immediate Protectors. However wise and humane the establishment of these Dispensaries have been, have they not been deficient in producing that effective good they otherwise would, if the zeal and abilities of

the medical attendants had met a contemporaneous assistance by the comforts and cleanliness attached to an Hospital or Infirmary, which on a very small scale should be annexed to all those Rural Institutions, for the reception of Incurables, and of such other numerous objects, which the afflictions of misery and disease may render necessary to be received into those Asylums? The necessity of those receptacles for misery and wretchedness must be obvious to every person that frequents the approaches to the Roman Catholic places of Worship, and the Fairs through Ireland, where the most shocking objects are exhibited, sufficient to make a feeling mind disgusted with human nature, and with the indifference of the Government to such harassing and painful scenes. While those beings are so offensive to the feelings of the humane, their exposure is often attended with the most fatal consequences to delicate Females in a state of pregnancy; and from this palpable circumstance the Legislature are peculiarly bound to inquire into and amend the state of the Irish Poor.

Fourthly.—The Grand Jury of the County of Cork have some short time since recommended to Government, the establishment of a General Work House and Penitentiary for this great County, on a similar plan to the Institution of this kind in Dublin; and great credit is due to that re-

spectable body for this suggestion. As public necessity, and the calamities of the times, render this measure highly expedient, and as its extensive utility will be elucidated in a separate letter, an allusion is simply made to it at present, as this Penitentiary would be materially connected with the Rural Asylums, affording the best means of punishing refractory members that may be vicious at them from habit or from a depraved disposition. But it will be absolutely necessary to have on a small plan a Work-house for idle and disorderly persons and mendicants, at the Baronial or Parochial Institutions, where all vagrants should be sent, and obliged to work under proper task-masters, with distinguishing dresses and badges, for the general benefit of the Asylums, and allowing to each person one-fourth of his earnings. When this system shall be in operation, the Public should be earnestly solicited to avoid giving alms to itinerant beggars, as this indiscriminate alms-giving fosters iniquity, indolence, and vice; while it gives to the wicked and depraved what the benevolent donors intended for the relief of misery and actual distress. But that the poor in these Asylums should occasionally benefit by the kindness of the passing stranger, boxes with locks and keys may be placed at places of great public resort, for the Donations of the charitable and humane—a

practice which exists at the Custom Houses, and some Coffee Houses, &c. Through these boxes communications may be made to the Committees of the Institutions, and reference to objects of misfortune and distress, on the same private and humane plan practised in France under Buonaparte's government. The relief of such objects will be comprised in the 9th suggestion.

Fifthly.—That distinct apartments and grounds for exercise should be appropriated in each Institution, for such females whose conduct required reformation. In this department, and in the superintendence of the Schools, the Ladies of Ireland would have a gratifying opportunity afforded to them, of uniting their exertions with the other managers of the Institutions, and realizing that virtue which Cowper so beautifully expresses.

Oh, never seen but in thy blest effects,  
Or felt, but in the soul that Heaven selects,  
Who seeks to praise thee, and to make thee known  
To other hearts, must have thee in his own.

In the common Work Houses in Ireland, the want of extensive ground so difficult to be procured in large cities and towns, where these establishments are, and the too indiscriminate mixture of the wicked and depraved, the idle and profligate, with those of superior conduct, operate to retard any material amendment in the

morals of their inhabitants, and particularly of the females, where the deficiency of influence by example always checks their immediate reformation. But in these Rural Asylums, where space and comfort should be united with cleanliness and industry, our Irish Ladies of superior rank and intelligence, whose acts of general benevolence are so conspicuous in causing the greatest good to mankind, would have the happiest effect by being constant visitors at these Asylums, and by their superintendence, their admonitions, and their counsel, they would be the direct means of rescuing many of their own sex from ruin, and restoring them to their friends and society. Such acts of mercy on the part of our fair country-women, would redound to the advantage of those who perform them, and how great would be the satisfaction to those Ladies, to reflect on time so well spent, and perhaps gained from the most frivolous occupations.

Religion, whose chief bond is charity, has guided females of the first rank, to visit the residence of the poor, even of the sick poor, and with their own hands to administer not only pecuniary relief, but medicine, neither dreading the ridicule of the more fashionable part of their sex, nor the apprehension of infection; but proving that they have received that benefit from the Christian Religion, and that they pursued the same course

which its divine author practised, in going about doing good. It is to the exertions of such benevolent females, that some of our most useful charities owe their commencement; for fortunately many of our best informed Ladies have had more leisure than men, to inquire into all the minutiae of the miseries of human life; and should the Legislature in their wisdom powerfully promote the best interests of society in establishing these institutions, those Ladies whose charity has been so conspicuous, would feel double zeal in thus receiving Parliamentary aid, which would so effectually relieve the general distress of the poor, and place their continued attention to their concerns in the most essential light. Without the active aid of private individuals, all public acts for the amelioration of the poor would be nugatory, and the plan for relieving them must prove abortive, or become the source of frauds, iniquity, and idleness. It is in public feeling, and salutary control, the poor must find their best safety, and the superintendence these institutions should be subject to, will prove their best security against neglect or peculation.

Sixthly.—In most of our large parishes and even in several of our baronies, there are no Bridewells for confining irregular and riotous persons. If these were established under an active police, they would be the best means of tran-

quillizing the Country, and keeping it in a more regular state of subordination. Bridewells should therefore be attached to those Asylums, which would also answer as the place for punishing misdemeanours. As instances have also occurred of the great insecurity of the public pounds for cattle, which are constantly placed under the care of an elderly Female, and as constantly broken open, it may be advisable to have a pound attached to the Bridewell at the Asylum, both of which should be placed under the care of one of the Barony Constables, who should always reside at the Asylums.

Seventhly.—There should be a Committee Room of sufficient extent, not only for the immediate purposes of the Asylums, but also for the Magistrates to hold their Meetings in, or for their weekly courts, should the Legislature deem those courts advisable. It requires no great argument to prove that the system of administering justice in petty cases in Ireland requires great revision. On the present system, the laws are not sufficiently respected, and the time lost in waiting for a six months Sessions, or travelling 20 or 30 miles to a remote Sessions town, places the relief of the Law beyond the power of many individuals. Advantage is consequently taken of this great inconvenience, and numerous crimes are committed, which if the Laws in petty cases

were administered weekly as in the Recorder's Court in Cork, would greatly tend to promote substantial justice. Independent of the business already stated that may be transacted at these Asylums, the Committee Room would also answer for Assemblies or Balls, the benefits resulting from which, should be strictly appropriated to provide additional comforts for the Poor, and premiums for cleanliness, industry, &c.—among the adults and children. Such amusements being held at these Asylums would induce the gay and young to feel an early interest in their general prosperity.

Eighthly.—The Committees of the institutions should be empowered to establish a Saving Bank in each, on the wise and humane system introduced by Mr. ROSE, and they should be further empowered to lend the money lodged at interest, on substantial deposits redeemable as under the Pawnbroking Act, which produce of interest would be more beneficial to the Poor, than vesting the same in the public funds, and the security *under proper management*, would be as undeniable. Besides it is a system that would be attended with the most useful results, as the Poor themselves, would thus become immediately instrumental to their own relief; and it would also by being extended to each Barony, or Parish, have a powerful tendency to remove the



almost proverbial improvidence of the lower orders.

Ninthly.—If a system of friendly or benefit societies could be judiciously introduced among the lower classes, it may be the happy means of securing support to the members of them in cases of sickness, accident, misfortune or old age, or in providing relief for their widows and orphans. As the managing Committees of those Asylums should be persons of acknowledged integrity and worth, the working classes could not have better guardians of their interest than their respectable neighbours, whose situation would induce them to feel a greater interest in their welfare than those at a more remote distance, and who, if they did not act honestly by them, would have a fear on their minds of being justly reproached by those they were constantly in the habit of meeting. But of this mismanagement there is little to be apprehended.

The propositions as to the Saving Bank, the advance of money to the Poor on deposits, and the friendly societies being connected with those Asylums, are of the utmost importance, and require the greatest judgment to have the regulations simple, and the most essential care in selecting an honest and competent Clerk for the business, but this person may also be either Parish Clerk, or Clerk to the weekly Magistrates. But

no money should be permitted to go through his hands, the receipts and payments being committed to the Treasurer, or his or her Deputy ; who should be Ladies or Gentlemen of respectability chosen annually, and who should pay all orders of the Committee, entered by the clerk. One of these Ladies or Gentlemen, or one of the Committee to act for them, should attend daily for two hours each day at the Asylums.

Tenthly.—As experience has proved that the payment of small sums to poor Room-keepers, has been the most useful charity, the Committee should be empowered to allot at their discretion as much money each week to this laudable purpose, as the Grand Juries of the County from the extent of the population of the district of each Asylum should deem proper.

There is now submitted to the humane consideration of the Legislature and the Public, some important suggestions for the relief of our Poor. But the proposer of them, feels that these suggestions would be apparently impracticable, if a series of employment was not judiciously arranged for the objects admitted to these Asylums. The employment must vary according to the local situation of each, according to the demand for the articles that should be manufactured, and the produce raised on the ground attached to each Asylum, which should be

necessarily extensive, at least on the ratio of half an acre, to each adult, likely to be admitted. It is on the best plan of industrious economy those Institutions should be founded, and the writer of these letters wishes to caution the lower classes, that in thus feebly advocating their cause he only recommends that the *actual impotent alone* should be allowed to live in a state of idleness, that all those who can work, on a personal inspection of the Surgeon, should be immediately provided with what is suitable to their occupation, and be obliged to contribute to their own support. Land therefore as it is, the great parent of the most valuable productions, should be procured by the Grand Juries of each County, on the recommendation of an eligible lot by a majority of all the Subscribers, of One Guinea a Year each to these Asylums, a meeting being necessarily held for this primary purpose, where the principal landed proprietor, in the district should preside.

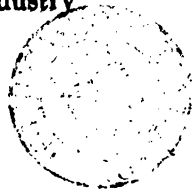
The land so recommended should be valued, at an annual acreable rent by a Jury impannelled by the High Sheriff of each County, and sworn in his presence, and the land so appraised, should under the Act of Parliament be vested in perpetuity, in the Trustees of each County, who should consist of the Bishops and Deans of the Dioceses in each County, of the Custos Rotulorum, the Governors, the High Sheriffs, the Assistant Bar-

Justices, Treasurers, Clerks of the Peace, and the County Inspector, who should be the perpetual official Trustees, and County visitors of each Asylum, and who should be bound annually to visit and inspect them, with great minuteness and exactness. All the Gentlemen of the County and Sessions Grand Juries, with the Magistrates, whether of the County, or City, or Town, should be deemed County visitors. The clerk at the Asylums should always have a visitors book, ready to receive their remarks. Those Institutions being thus placed, under the occasional inspection of such efficient visitors would be open to have every fraud, or abuse timely checked. The Grand Juries at Assizes should have the final control of the By-laws relating to those Institutions, the accounts of which, and their financial economy, should be submitted to them, at each Assizes, and a half yearly report prepared accordingly.

The Committee should consist of all the Magistrates of each division, of the Clergy of every religious persuasion, the Church Wardens, the Medical attendants of the Dispensaries, the High Constable or Collector of each Barony, who should be all of them permanent Members of the Committee. The other Members should be chosen from the Ladies and Gentlemen that have subscribed to the Asylums, One Guinea annually.

And Nine persons should be selected for an acting Monthly Committee, in whom should be vested the general details of the Institutions.

The most efficient and competent Clergyman if willing, should be nominated as the Superintendent of each Asylum, and the Medical attendant should be his Deputy. Both should necessarily reside at the Asylums, and be adequately paid. The Treasurer, Deputy Treasurer, and Clerk, have been before noticed, as well as the Barony Constables. These Officers with Masters and Mistresses for the Children, a Warden to direct the work at the Institution, and to see that all are properly employed, are all the persons apparently requisite. For it is in the character and responsibility of the Superintendent and his Deputy, and in their solicitude for the welfare of the Institution, that the local prosperity of each Charity must mainly depend. And as all public exertions are most effectually countenanced by public reward, the Grand Juries of each County should be empowered, in addition to the permanent salaries, to give suitable annual premiums in money, or plate to the superintendents, and their deputies, of the three best managed Institutions in each County, apportioning the amount to the respective merits of each. Thus a patriotic stimulus would be held out to the superintendents, to unite zeal and attention with industry.



and perseverance, in promoting the best interests of charity. The writer humbly hopes he has clearly elucidated the leading particulars of these Asylums; his next letter on this subject will contain suggestions as to the general funds for erecting the buildings and paying the expenses of these highly necessary establishments, where *One General System of Useful Benevolence may be profitably combined in One General and well digested Plan.* In submitting this, the writer is aware how greatly inconvenienced many private individuals have been, in their endeavours to do partial good, and he is satisfied that no public Charities can partake of general good, unless there is a complete union of all the requisite principles, not only as to the competency of individuals who are to be the acting managers, but as to the convenience of the necessary materials. These could not be arranged for any partial Institution, the expenses of which could not be separately maintained. But on this plan, there is an ample employment for the persons he has suggested, and if the means shall not be deemed impracticable, he hopes the Country will have reason to rejoice in the success of a measure so interesting to

A TRUE FRIEND TO IRELAND.

## FOURTH LETTER,

### ON THE SUBJECT OF THE POOR OF IRELAND.

*The British system of Poor Laws unfit for Ireland.—Their defects noticed in Parliament, and the subject of inquiry.—Exertions of J. C. CURWEN, Esq. M. P. on this interesting subject.—His plan approved of for England, though not suitable to Ireland from local disadvantages.—Objections to the allotment of a part of the National Taxes obviated.—Gross impositions on the Public by Licensed and Illicit Distilleries.—Plan proposed for a part of the duty on Spirits being allotted to the support of the Poor, the probable means of checking further frauds.—Assessed Taxes considered; a portion proposed to be allotted for the support of the Poor, constant frauds on them; out of the power of Excise Officers to control; important note on the subject of Licensed Distilleries.—The Country by adopting this plan, may shortly be relieved from the expense of so large a Military Establishment.—A graduated state of Taxation on Absentees proposed; ditto on Bachelors, and on Married Persons without Children.—A slight Tax on the entry of Ships and Vessels, for the sole purpose of relieving Sea-faring persons in distress.—If these proposed means are inadequate, a County Tax on Porter, Ale and Beer may be resorted to.—Recapitulation of the proposed funds partly from official documents, and partly from supposition.—If in the progress of these Institutions, further funds may be requisite, Ecclesiastical Revenues may be applicable to the object.—Overgrown Livings incompatible*

*with the Apostolic Doctrines.—The state of the Clergy in Ireland deserving inquiry ; their exertions of the first importance to the Asylums ; hopes entertained by the writer, of Parliament considering these suggestions.—Doubts entertained by some of their practicability ; objections endeavoured to be obviated.—Plan compared with the English system.—Consolidation of the Irish Revenues with Great-Britain, favourable to the writer's suggestions.—An important improvement in the collection of the Taxes.—Expense of the poor in England.—The one-eighth not too much for Ireland.—The Bank of Ireland to advance sums for Buildings, or the Treasury to make advances on they have already done for Mail Coach Roads.*

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE  
**CORK ADVERTISER.**

SIR,

The introduction of Poor Laws into Ireland, on the present defective system so long acted on the Sister Country, has been justly deprecated by every well informed person. The fluctuating appointment of overseers with the authority given them by Parliament, and the compulsory duty imposed on them have been considered as the just cause of all the evil that has crept into the management of the concerns of the poor. In the English papers we constantly see the paupers at work houses advertised to be farmed for their daily maintenance, and the



produce of their labour and industry assigned to the contractors, who thus become in too many instances oppressive task-masters, while their allowance of food is scarcely sufficient for the support of human nature. In penitentiaries established for notorious offenders, this system can scarcely be tolerated; but in establishments founded for charitable purposes, it appears revolting to every principle of benevolence. The Imperial Legislature are now employed in devising a plan for the amendment of this system, and also for a more equitable mode of raising a fund by which the Poor are to be supported.

The Poor Rates in England have been raised by a poundage on houses and lands; in some populous parishes, those rates have in times of great scarcity amounted to the full rack rent paid for the houses and land, and under the laws as they now stand, there is no distinction made between persons of acknowledged wealth and small families, and the industrious tradesman or farmer with large families; the latter are bound to pay as much rates for their holdings as the former, though their circumstances so materially differ. Thus the Poor Rates at present in England are a grievous Tax on struggling industry, and on agricultural prosperity, when the great capitalist, the miser, and the absentee spendthrift, are comparatively exempt. Mr. CURWEN, who has ho-

noured the writer of these letters with his correspondence, and who has so laudably introduced the subject into Parliament, has proposed that the Poor shall be supported by a Tax on property, and by a legal contribution among themselves, which would have a happy tendency to dispose them to habits of industry, and to give them a just and equitable claim to future relief in the time of distress, from that fund which they had enlarged by their early industry and labour. He has even wisely proposed that the Army and Navy should contribute weekly to this highly national object: so that the claims of the contributors should be imperative on the future managers of the concerns of the Poor. These weekly payments as proposed by Mr. CURWEN, would operate on the same system as benefit societies, but with greater effect, in as much as the funds would be guaranteed by the nation; and the checks and balances introduced on this great scale would completely prevent every attempt at peculation or fraud, while a perfect security would exist that the funds should never be reduced to a state of insolvency. In what has come before the public on this interesting subject, Mr. CURWEN wishes to restore to the labouring classes in England, the *spur, motive, and necessity* for exertion, which a long continuance of defective Laws had nearly eradicated from their

minds, so that in many Parishes, the operation of these Laws are the greatest affliction the inhabitants labour under.

Mr. CURWEN has suggested, that property which arises from the labour and industry of man, should contribute to the relief of man, when afflicted with poverty, misfortunes, or ill health. Without man, and the assistance we all mutually receive from each other, the earth would not yield productive fruits, and the immense incomes derived from the public funds, would totally cease; therefore in England it is just, that every denomination of property should contribute to a *National Fund for the relief of the Poor*, and for the amelioration of their moral and religious character.

In Ireland, however, there are many weighty reflections attached not only to the system of improving the condition of the lower classes, but as to the funds from whence this extended system must be supported.

It has been stated to the writer, that the Legislature could not weaken the hands of Government, by allowing a portion of the national taxes for this important object; if the allotment of any part of those taxes from the concerns of the State, were not accompanied with a contemporaneous advantage, it would be useless to expect such disposal, but as great and notorious frauds and eva-

pions exist in the collection of some branches of the Excise Revenues in Ireland, this difficulty is obviated if it shall be shown that by a more vigilant system of ascertaining that Revenue, and collecting its amount, by making the prosperity of the lower orders deeply interested in detecting the extensive evasions of the Excise duty not only by Illicit Stills, but in those of the large Capitalists, who, under the sanction of their license, and with the influence of their purse, do more real injury to the State, than all the manufacturers of Spirits in Illicit Stills in Ireland, against whom minute inquiries are now instituted. Illicit Distillation, when a part of the duty on Spirits legally distilled, shall be allotted to the relief of the Poor, would then be powerfully checked by such laudable conduct as is now pursued by the Right Hon. JAMES FITZGERALD,\*

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*\* Illicit Distillation.*

Hereto we have witnessed the insufficiency of every attempt to suppress private distillation, but we have now before us the outline of a plan, which, if generally adopted, would root out the evil effectually. We seriously recommend it to the consideration of every Gentleman of landed property, convinced that its adoption would produce the effect intended, and thereby furnish the most substantial proofs of patriotism. The plan, which is simple and admits of no difficulty, is clearly laid down in the following notice, which the Right Hon. JAMES FITZGERALD had caused to be circulated among his tenantry, on such parts of his estate, in this County, as he understood private distillation to be

on his estates in the County of Clare. But without the Poor feeling an interest in the abolition sanctioned in: --

"Whereas Illicit Distillation has, since the beginning of the Year 1815, prevailed to a great degree on several parts of my estate in the parishes of Inchicronane, Kilkeedy, and Dysert, I hereby promise to pay a reward of 20*l.* to any one who will, within twelve months from the date hereof, give me private information, which may lead to the discovery of such of my tenants as shall be guilty thereof. And I do, on my honour, declare, that I will not, directly or indirectly, disclose the name of the person who shall give such information."

"And, as a further discouragement of a practice so ruinous to the peace of the county, and to the welfare of the deluded and unfortunate who engage therein, I hereby declare, that I shall consider the occupiers of any part of my estate, whereon illicit distillation shall be practised, as accomplices therein, and privy thereto, and that I will, upon being informed thereof, exercise all the powers of a landlord, to distress and sell to the lowest object of distress, and afterwards eject, (for the most of the occupiers of the lands whereon the practice prevails owe two years' rent,) and that I never will let an acre in the said parishes to any one whom, though I may not be able to convict, I shall suspect of illicit distillation, nor to any one connected with him. And I hereby publicly invite the proprietors and respectable tenants of the lands in the said parishes, to associate and establish a parochial patrol, or watch, for the purpose of protecting their properties from the ruin which must ensue from the prevalence of such a practice, to the support of which establishment I will subscribe as liberally as any other proprietor in the said parishes." (*Ennis Chronicle.*)

"JAMES FITZGERALD."

"DUBLIN, September 30, 1816."

of Illicit Distillation, every partial measure of this kind, would be ineffectual. It has been proposed in Parliament to reduce the duty on Spirits. This has been wisely objected to, by one of our most patriotic and active Irish Members, Sir JOHN NEWPORT, who appears always at his post, protecting the interests of his constituents and his Country. In this objection the writer perfectly agrees, because if the duty should be reduced, the morals of the lower orders must be greatly injured and their domestic comforts proportionably lessened. The reduction in the price of ardent spirits must materially increase their consumption, and this consumption must increase the vices and misfortunes of society. But it is necessary, in order to afford equal legal advantages to the man of small capital with the great Distiller,\* that the Excise depart-

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\* It would appear feasible, that in future a military guard were to be stationed at each Distillery, as at the Custom House or King's Stores. That all the Spirits should be sent as manufactured into the Excise Stores, where the Distillers should attend to their sale, and from whence they could be delivered on payment of duty, as in the article of Foreign Spirits, and Tobacco; no Distiller should be allowed to sell any Spirits from his own Store or Distillery; the Excise Stores should be the sole spirit mart. All the casks and packages going from a Distillery should be closely watched, and in case the military made any seizure they should be liberally rewarded by fines on the Distillers, and not by any futile or insignificant.

ment shall be empowered to grant every facility to the working of small Stills. This plan by also apportioning one-third of the duty on spirits towards a national fund for the general relief of the Poor, would cut up illicit distillation in every part of Ireland, as it would make every man woman and child interested in checking

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cant interest in the sale of the goods seized. This mode of placing all Spirits manufactured in the licensed stills under King's locks and keys, is of an extremely simple nature, and the practice already in use, as to imported goods, is sufficient proof of its utility, and feasibility. The consumers should have no recourse to the Distilleries; the King's Stores should be the only place, where Spirits over two gallons should be permitted to be sold, and the Distillers should, moreover, be bound by oath, not to sell any Spirits, or use Malt, without payment of the full duty, and in case of offending therein, be liable, however rich and respectable they may be in appearance, to the penalties of wilful and corrupt perjury. The Law has not enforced on the Distillers, any oath to check them in their evasions, while the Brewers have a serious and solemn obligation imposed on them, and some instances have occurred where the Retailers of Spirits have been influenced to commit perjury, by several licensed distillers, who not being placed under the restriction of an oath, do not hesitate without remorse, to prevail on others to perjure themselves. Thus the entire system of distillation is at variance with morals and honesty, and a most serious obstacle to the amelioration of the Poor. If this measure proposed, should on trial be found ineffectual, the Legislature may ultimately deem it prudent, that government should be the sole manufacturers of Spirits.

abuses that would so materially injure themselves, and destroy the chief source of that national provision for them against the day of their distress. At present the poor man has no interest in checking frauds on the Revenue, and if he informs of illicit transactions, his character is vilified, and his life often endangered. Let the Legislature enable the Poor to feel an interest in the duty on spirits, and this feeling will induce them, through the admonitions of their Clergy, the Magistracy, and Gentry, to think it not discreditable to inform the proper Officers of illegal transactions. Thus without injuring the resources of Government a great income could be raised for the Poor, and the Poor themselves would be the collateral guardians of the public Revenue.

A portion of the Assessed Taxes, and the Duties on Cards, Dice, and Game Licenses, which are greatly evaded, may also be most advantageously appropriated as County Taxes, and produce double the sum they do at present, under judicious modifications. It is well known there are many of the Gentry who keep Riding Horses, Dogs, and Men Servants, without paying the proper taxes, in like manner Gigs and Jaunting Cars are kept, and the owners evade the duties. And this they will continue, as long as the lower orders of the community feel no concern in the detection of abuses. If the taxes as above de-



scribed could be appropriated for the Poor, the crown revenue would shortly meet a proportionable saving *by the great reduction of the military establishments in Ireland*, and of the enormous expense attending criminal prosecutions and the transportation of convicts, so that substantial good would gradually supplant positive and notorious evils; and as before said, the best protection of the state would consist in the love and gratitude of the people.

The third resource for the relief of the Poor could be easily levied by a patriotic, moderate, and graduated tax on all absentees. All persons who are unmarried, widows, or widowers without children, and deriving any income from Ireland exceeding 200l. per annum, should pay 10 per cent: those who are married and have no children,  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. and all others 5 per cent. Absentees seldom contribute to the support of any of our charities, and there are few instances of their private benevolence being conspicuous. Their remoteness from the scenes of woe and distress renders them callous to the miseries of their countrymen, *and so that they procure their rents*, they are totally regardless of the sufferings their absence and their apathy occasion to many of those, by whose industry and labour they are supported in luxury and extravagance. This has been admitted by the *highest authorities in both*

Houses of Parliament, as the main cause of all the afflictions Ireland groans under, and this liberal admission, this positive truth promulgated in the Legislature, removes the difficulties that would exist in making absentee property subject to remove a portion of that injury caused by the Absentees themselves.\* If the Irish prefer the,

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\* Among the innumerable evils resulting to Ireland from Absentees, Mr. RAWSON, in his Statistical Survey of Kildare, records the following; (page 54.) "A Reverend Doctor, who has an estate near Athy, was so terrified in 1798, he fled the Kingdom, selling a large property in the Irish funds at an immense loss. A portion of his estate was tenanted by a man of fifty for his own life; he subdivided it, and let to a number of very industrious tenants, who occupied for many years. The life dropped suddenly on the 15th of March. The news reached the Doctor, who, forgetful of his former fears, posted to reap the golden harvest. He visited with apparent kindness the different occupiers, and encouraged them with hopes of their not being dispossessed; he found the lands uninjured, well divided with good quickset hedge rows, and had no just cause for displacing tenants, who had grown on the soil from their infancy: they gave the best proof of honesty and ability; they paid him all rent and arrears to the day. On the 25th of March, he took possession of houses, &c. set their lands to a stranger to them and to him, and, without any notice or time to provide, near one hundred souls were turned adrift, without house or hovel to shelter them! But they were Irish, and he non-resident and an absentee."

"This will not be credited in Great Britain; such could not happen there."

"How can Ireland bear up under the drain of absentees; every County, almost every Parish cursed with absentee pro-

climate, society, and manners abroad to the love of country, and the desire of doing good at home, it is fit that they should leave a proportion of that income they derive from their Country, to rescue their famishing fellow creatures from hunger, nakedness, and despair. Therefore when a wise and necessary provision for our Poor shall be considered, it is hoped that this suggestion will meet that consideration, which its probable effects on the state of Ireland so manifestly recommend. A Tax on Absentees will be the surest mode of procuring the benefit resulting to society, from a resident gentry; and a resident gentry will effectually promote the prosperity and civilization of this Country. In this view, Mr. PEEL declared his sentiments in the House of Commons, on the 27th of February, and happy will it be for Ireland, if his abilities, his influence, and his humanity shall be extended in a short period to effect this important measure, and induce the Irish to love their native homes.

A Gentleman of fortune, possessing qualities of mind and heart suitable to his rank, would be of more real service to his Country by residing in it, than if a tax of thirty per cent were levied on

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prieters, exhibit the same miserable avaricious example, which is sufficient to cause riot and insubordination, and to bring down the vengeance of providence on such illiberal and iniquitous landlords.

his property, and he an absentee. But it has been said, this proposition of taxing absentees could never be entertained in Parliament, as the English members would oppose any plan that would have a tendency to prevent so large a portion of wealth being spent in England, as is now done by the natives of Ireland. But the great majority of the English members have always acted on the basis of liberality, and independence, and they will not oppose this measure when it shall be introduced, as the interests of one country are inseparably interwoven with the other.\* It has been also said, that the Irish members would oppose it, as it would be imposing a tax on themselves, but a clause for this purpose could be introduced, exempting such members as had an establishment and residence in Ireland during the prorogation of Parliament, from the tax.

Property being proposed in the Legislature as the principal source for maintaining the Poor of England, it should also contribute in Ireland to the same laudable purpose, but apportioned to the existing difficulties of the country. Every attempt to impose further taxation on persons of

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\* Among the Absentee supporters of Charitable Institutions in the County of Cork, Lord ARDEN has always been the most liberal contributor, his example is highly deserving of public notice, and of being followed by other absentee proprietors.

families and moderate means should be studiously avoided ; but a tax of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on the property of Bachelors and Widowers† without Children probably would not be impolitic, in as much as these gentlemen are, by being free from family cares, better able to contribute to public exigencies, than those that are married. Besides, a tax on Bachelors having over 150*l.* per annum, would be very popular among the fair sex, and an object deserving Parliamentary attention, as it may induce Gentlemen of property to more generally form matrimonial connexions and dispose them to habits of domestic society, while such habits would greatly promote the civilization of Ireland.

Another class of Persons appears a very just object of taxation for the support of the Poor. It is well known that in Ireland there are many wealthy married persons of large fortunes, that have no children, and consequently no expenses adequate to the wealth with which they are blessed. Large as the fortunes of these persons are, the public are not conscious of their generally bestowing any proportionate sums towards chari-

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† As innumerable instances have occurred, of Bachelors leaving immense properties behind them, it may probably be attended with a good effect to society, and cause the hearts of such men to expand during their life time, if a tax of 20 per cent. were laid on the probates of the Wills, or other legal documents of persons thus circumstanced. This tax may produce a large revenue for the support of the Poor.

table uses, and as it is fit that the infirmities of old age, sickness, and abject poverty should be relieved from the sources of the affluent, a small tax of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. from the incomes of persons having over 200*l.* per annum does not appear unreasonable.

A tax thus raised on the properties of absentees, bachelors, and married persons without children, would throw the principal resources for the maintenance of the Poor on the abundance of the Rich, and on the hoards of the Miser, totally freeing persons of families, and incumbered with the anxious care of providing for them, from the additional charge of contributing to the support of the Poor.

As seafaring persons would frequently be relieved through the proposed Asylums, and as this relief should be granted by the managers to all such persons whom shipwreck, and the numerous accidents of a maritime life may reduce to the necessity of applying for assistance, a tax of ten shillings, on the entry of all vessels from a Foreign port, and five shillings from a British port should be collected at the respective Custom Houses, and paid to the Treasurers of each County, to be allotted by the respective Grand Juries at Assizes, to such establishments only as should be instrumental to the relief of suffering mariners. Asylums situated near the coast may

occasionally prove the happy means of affording instant and effectual relief to our distressed fellow-beings, whom the accidents so frequently happening at sea, may force on our shores. In Ireland there are no Institutions in which the distressed mariner can be received.

If the foregoing means are found to be inadequate for the support of the Poor of Ireland, assistance may be received by a duty collected by the Treasurers of the Counties on porter, ale, and small beer, brewed in Ireland; one penny per gallon on porter and ale, and one halfpenny on small beer, would be a very moderate tax, and produce a considerable revenue, and it is a duty of easy collection, and would be popular among the poor themselves, inasmuch as they are the great consumers of Porter. This tax would by no means depreciate the agricultural interest, as its reaction would so materially benefit the lower orders of our peasantry, and uphold a principle already recommended of making the poor themselves instrumental to their own support.

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### RECAPITULATION.

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The Excise duty on strong waters in Ireland amounted to £1,422,317 16s. 3½d. by the return from the Accountant General of Excise and Taxes, up to the 5th January 1816. If the poor were to participate in the produce of this duty

*illicit Distillation* would be totally checked; the licensed distiller could not with impunity commit so many frauds, and probably two millions gallons of spirits in addition would pay duty, which would increase this portion of taxes to at least £2,000,000 Os. Od.

One-third of which allowed the poor  
would be..... 666,666 13 4

The other portion of taxes which from the Collectors being transient persons, are liable to abuses, are the Carriage Duty, returned at..... £117,362 18 7½  
Male Servants' Duty.. 54,648 17 8½  
Horse Duty..... 104,365 4 10½  
Dog Duty..... 15 595 14 10

Of the assessed taxes... £291,972 16 0½

The Duty on Carriages has been considered in these times of distress unproductive to the Revenue, and injurious to the numerous manufacturers employed in this trade; but if some modifications were to take place the ensuing session, more carriages would be used, tradesmen would find employment and the taxes though lessened to each individual, would produce as much, if not more, than the last returns to Parliament: the same may be said of the duty on Servants, Horses and Dogs, all of which, if made County taxes, collected by the Barony or City Collectors, and paid into the hands of the respective County Treasurers, would produce at least..... 291,972 16 0

*Carried forward, ...* £938,632 0 4



*Brought forward,....* £958,639 9 4

The duty on Cards and Dice appears scarcely worth its collection as a national tax; the return is only £3,198 19s. 6d. if modified and made a County tax, these resources would produce at least.....

10,000 0 0

There does not appear any particular return made to Parliament of the receipt of the duties on Game Licenses; they are probably included in the gross amount of the Stamp Duties. But it appears from official information, that they are very deficient of the amount which was formerly received. The great difficulty of the Stamp Distributors ascertaining those that sport without licenses, renders this duty a very partial and ineffectual tax; for many Magistrates who *should* be the guardians of the interests of the state, transgress the game laws themselves, and keep dogs and guns for sporting, without any license; if the Assessed Taxes as before stated, the Stamp duties on Cards and Dice, also a small duty on Billiard Tables, with the Game qualifications were made local taxes in each County, collected by the Barony Collectors, paid into the hands of the County Treasurers, towards the fund for the relief of the Poor, and the Church Wardens of each Parish *ex-officio* to assist the Collectors in levying all those Taxes, their amount would be considerably more productive; the tax on Billiard Tables and Game Licenses would produce at least.....

50,000 0 0

*Carried forward,....* £1,018,939 9 4

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*Brought forward, . . . .* £1,018,639 9 4

At this time of Agricultural distress when the incomes of Absentees are necessarily deficient from their former remittances which were computed at £3,000,000 annually, therefore under the present great depression of lands and houses in Ireland, probably one million may be deducted off this sum, the tax on the remaining two millions, averaging on the three scales of property, may produce 6 per cent. . . . .

120,000 0 0

An Income Tax on resident Bachelors and Widowers without children, on property of £500,000 per annum at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per ct.

12,500 0 0

Income Tax on married Persons having no children, and whose property extends to £200 per annum; the amount of this sum may be computed on £500,000 at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per ct.

12,500 0 0

It appears by the returns made to Parliament by the Comptrollers of Tonnage, &c.; that the number of Vessels that have entered into Irish Ports, in the Year ending 5th January, 1816, are

|                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
| Irish Vessels . . . . . | 2314 |
| British . . . . .       | 7984 |
| Foreign . . . . .       | 501  |

Total . . . . . 10,799

Admit  $\frac{2}{3}$  of those }  
vessels were from } 7200 at 5s. £1,800  
British Ports

One-third Fo- }  
reign Ports } 3599 at 10s. 1799 $\frac{1}{2}$  10s.

\*3,599 10 0

Total . . . . . £1,167,238 19 4

\* For note see page 71.

If the above taxes were found inadequate, the tax on porter, ale and small beer may ultimately be resorted to, as may an allotment of a portion of the Revenue of *large* Ecclesiastical livings, which have been found injurious to the best interests of Religion, destructive of the Apostolic doctrine, and the abolition of which has made the Church of Scotland so much respected, and so effectual in promoting true Religion and Morality in that peaceable, industrious and enlightened portion of the British Empire. In Scotland, if credit is to be given to the statement in Parliament, there is no great inequality in the incomes of the Clergy, there is no starving zeal, no spiritual laziness, or no salaried idleness to be met with. The Clergy are scrupulously attentive to their religious duties, and they mostly live in their respective parishes, beloved and regarded by their flocks, by whom they are considered as their advisers and best friends in the time of distress and difficulty.

As any resources for the Poor from Ecclesiastical establishments can *only be prospective*; and not intended by the writer to encroach on present possessions, the Clergy need not be alarmed at any innovation being suggested injurious to their immediate interests; but the Legislature from this hint may keep this resource in view, and convert it to a great national object, the same as

they have already done several employments under the Crown. But in these regulations, it is to be hoped, the interests of the resident Clergy, particularly Curates, who are generally the most deserving class, will be studiously regarded. As the Officers of the Revenue *are now obliged to do their duty*, which, it is well known, was very inadequately performed before, so should the Clergy be more generally obliged to do theirs. Greater exertions on their parts would tend to more generally civilize and improve the morals of the people, and competent Clergymen being appointed, the principal superintendents or governors of the Rural Asylums, a most favourable opportunity would be afforded them, of practising with effect, what many have so laudably endeavoured to inculcate, that is *active and useful Charity*.

That the Legislature will zealously take into consideration the suggestions now submitted to theirs and the public wisdom, the writer has strong hopes, from the favourable communications made to him, from some of the most distinguished members of that august body, who are so generally aware of the numerous evils that press upon the morals, industry, and energies of the country, and who appear so willing to countenance any plan that was capacious in extent, and suitable to the circumstances of Ireland.

Several Gentlemen in many parts of Ireland, have admitted to the writer the justice of these suggestions, but they doubted much their practicability, from the extreme difficulty of procuring funds at this time of general and extensive distress; but the writer humbly hopes, he has in this letter submitted a laudable and patriotic system of taxation, not affecting in the smallest degree, the industry or prosperity of the country, but powerfully operating in all its bearings to promote its domestic peace, its general happiness, and moral improvement. This system totally avoids the rock on which the English system has split, and it promises to give a stimulus to the exertions of the Poor, which must be productive of the best effects.

As the revenues of Ireland are most wisely consolidated with Great Britain, the Imperial Legislature will disregard the alienation of three hundred thousand pounds of the Irish assessed taxes from the revenues of the Crown, to objects of SUCH GREAT NATIONAL IMPORTANCE as the amelioration of the state of the Poor; and their assent to this alienation will be more easily procured, when they consider that THIS AMELIORATION will gradually tranquillize the Country, and render our great Military establishments in a very short time unnecessary, our criminal prosecutions less frequent, and totally remove the baneful necessity

ty of transporting felons to New Holland, the annual expense of which exceeds the amount of the assessed taxes before stated.

There is also another important consideration, namely, that by the superintendence of the Committee of the Asylums, a great and substantial check would be placed on the collection of the taxes, in which the Poor were to be interested, no frauds or evasions could take place, and the expense of collection would not be one-third of the present expense.

In England the probable expense of the Poor has been calculated at £8,000,000 annually. If the Poor of the Sister Country are to be benevolently relieved by this large sum, surely the one-eighth part will not be reckoned too much for the Poor of Ireland, who are in proportion to the population more extensive than those of England. Their state requires minute and serious investigation, and the wisdom of experience, with which the Legislature so much abounds, is powerfully called on to exercise that wisdom by immediate exertions in their behalf. A Committee of the House of Commons being moved for this Session, (as it is unfortunately too late to discuss so important a measure, during the present short period of Parliament sitting,) to enquire into the state of the Poor, would have the happy effect of inviting treatises on this most important subject, and eli-

citing the discussion of such measures as may be deemed most advisable for this great object. Before this letter is concluded, the writer begs leave to suggest that the necessary sums for erecting the Asylums, may be advanced by a loan from the Bank of Ireland, which derives *such immense advantages* from the countenance of the nation. The said loan to be repaid from the annual revenues of the Asylums, *with a moderate interest*, at the rate of one-twelfth part annually, until the entire is liquidated. Or the Treasury may advance therequisite payments as they have already done for Mail Coach Roads, many of which have only been really useful so far, as they have given employment to the Poor.

The next letter will treat of the buildings that may be requisite, and of the various sources of employment for their Inhabitants.

A TRUE FRIEND TO IRELAND.

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Note to page 66.

It may be a more equal mode of collection if the tax on Vessels from British Ports were regulated at one penny per ton, and two pence per ton from Foreign Ports, according to the Register Tonnage of the Vessels.

## FIFTH LETTER,

### ON THE SUBJECT OF THE POOR OF IRELAND.

*The funds proposed in the fourth letter instrumental to objects of National Utility.—Reasons why the Bank of Ireland should display its liberality and patriotism in advancing Money for erecting the Asylums.—Probable number of Objects that may be admitted in them.—Estimate of the sum required for building and the purchase of raw materials of manufacture.—Economy to be practised and frauds checked.—Drawbacks of duty on Timber and imported articles to be allowed.—The grant of a few condemned Men of War, would greatly facilitate the progress of the work.—Want of Timber in Ireland.—Wages to Tradesmen and Labourers to be regulated at Sessions.—Judgment in the choice of situations for the Asylums very necessary.—The nearer large Towns in each Barony the more convenient for the purposes of employment, and other advantages.—Great benefit likely to result to the Landed Proprietors from the establishment of those Asylums on their Estates, their liberality expected on the occasion.—Experienced Architects should be employed to give plans and superintend the buildings.—Gardens and Nurseries essential to the establishments.—National considerations should influence Statesmen to countenance the general plan.—Hemp and Flax genial to the climate of Ireland, their culture and manufacture an important source of employment.—Advantages from the exertions of the Inspector General of Linens*



*in Ireland.—His advice and experience useful in directing this branch of Industry.—The Manufacture of Cordage near the Sea Coast recommended, and of Coarse Woollens in the interior; also of Straw Plats, and Baskets.—All complicated machinery to be avoided.—Articles suitable to the probable sale to be principally manufactured.—Government Contracts may occasionally be undertaken, this suggestion considered.—The employment of the Poor a difficult object.—The present crisis most seasonable for the purpose, as the funds proposed will not affect the industrious or struggling classes of Society.—General observations on the state of the Poor in Ireland.—Poverty and Mendicity the Parents of idleness and crimes.—Urgent necessity of amendment.—Overstrained humanity to be avoided.—Hints as to the Superintendents, and their fair partners.—Female attention useful to the poor.—Remarks on the facility with which Government has raised immense sums for warlike purposes.—Equal necessity for raising funds to relieve the Poor.*

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE  
**CORK ADVERTISER.**

Sir,

In the fourth letter were detailed the resources from which the Rural Asylums may be supported: The candid will admit that no man of family, and that no person of industrious pursuits, can be effected through them; as they are at present in England, by the baneful operation of the Poor Laws. The system proposed totally removes

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every difficulty on the score of funds, while the re-action of the resources submitted, would have a powerful tendency to enlighten, invigorate and tranquillize the country, by assisting to restore to it, its absent gentry, in which consists the most valuable class of the population of a state, and the want of which is so severely felt through Ireland.

It has been suggested that the National Bank should advance the requisite sums for the erection of the Asylums, which at this period of distress among our tradesmen and mechanics, would afford the most beneficial means of useful employment to them. The Bank, as it has been largely benefited by the confidence and countenance of the nation, and as the national distress and privations have mainly tended to aggrandize its funds; possessing that liberality which all great commercial companies should have, and of which extensive liberality the writer has no doubt will not hesitate to contribute its assistance to the effectual support of the poor, particularly when such large national resources shall be allotted by Parliament as its security. But it is in the quantum of interest that it charges, that the best proof of its liberality will be felt and acknowledged. The Bank of England has lately accommodated the public with a loan of a few millions at 3 per cent. and it is hoped the Bank

of Ireland will not be less liberal, particularly as the proprietors have a further inducement, the desire they all individually must have, to promote the internal prosperity of their native country. In this view, Ireland looks up to them for their distinguished, liberal, and efficient aid.

The number of objects that may be admitted to the Asylums through Ireland, will probably be 100,000, or the one fiftieth part of the population of the country; this proportion may appear at first view very small, but internal accommodation is only meant for the *actually impotent*, and such as total inability deprives of the means of maintenance, seven pounds ten shillings per head would in this time of general economy be adequate for the buildings, and two pounds ten shillings per head, to form a capital for laying in the raw materials of manufacture, providing clothes and furniture, and the necessary implements of Agriculture, &c.—making the whole advance required One Million. But this sum would be almost inadequate to the object, if economy was not persevered in, every kind of fraud checked in its bud, and the Legislature to empower the Government to allow the drawbacks of the duties on all imported articles used in the buildings; the progress of which may be greatly facilitated by the donation of a few condemned men of war, with which the King's Dock Yards abound, and

which produce but little to the state. Ireland is very deficient in suitable timber for building ; therefore those old ships judiciously selected, and sent to proper ports in Ireland, would remove the necessity of any very large supply of timber, the most expensive article in building. The wages to be paid to the tradesmen and labourers should be ascertained by the Magistrates or Grand Juries at Sessions, and every accommodation afforded by all the Public Officers to expedite the business of the Asylums.

Great judgment would be required in the choice of situation for the Asylums, and of the quality of the ground contiguous to them. The nearer those Asylums are to the principal towns of each Barony, the better, on account of the convenience of the markets for the sale and purchase of goods ; and the greater the number of respectable inhabitants to employ the Poor, the less will be the expense of the Asylums. Besides the operation of the Savings Bank, and the Benefit Institutions established at the Asylums will have a powerful effect in introducing habits of industry and sobriety among the inhabitants of such towns, which form the mass of the population of their districts. The superintendence of so many respectable individuals who reside in the towns, is another object for recommending that the Asylums should be as near to

them as circumstances will admit. In procuring land suitable for the buildings, the Juries should be instructed to value the rent of the land, not at what it *was*, but what it is worth; taking care however that the interest of the occupying tenants, and their just expenditure should be as much as possible protected. And it is in regard to the ground for the Asylums, that the great landed proprietors, would have a favourable opportunity of displaying their liberality and benevolence. Noblemen and Gentlemen of large estates, and whose means are equal to such munificence, will in many instances no doubt make a perpetual demise of land sufficient for those Establishments; and they will find it their own interest to be bountiful on such occasions. Those Asylums will rescue their starving tenantry from the horrors of want, and the agonies of despair; their infant children will be educated, occasionally clothed, and rescued from impending misery and vice; industry will be encouraged on their properties; their tenants themselves will get enlightened, and the immoral habits proceeding from the vices of the ignorant will gradually but totally cease. Those Asylums erected on a small portion of a large estate would be its greatest blessing, and sufficient to induce the proprietors to afford them their powerful patronage.

Architects of experience should be invited by

the Grand Juries, to submit to their consideration, plans and elevations of the buildings, which should be in the cottage stile, uniting sufficient space with convenience, and affording the accommodation requisite from these outlines; at the same time, the whole of the buildings should be under one lock and key, and exhibit a pleasing regularity to the eye, so that they may attract the notice of the public. Separate beds should be arranged in all the departments, and not more than four, or five persons should be allowed to sleep in each room, ventilation should be studied, and every facility to insure cleanliness.

The Architects should be adequately paid according to the goodness of their plans, and afterwards employed to superintend the construction of the buildings.

Gardens and nurseries of great extent should be attached to each Asylum, as these would afford the means of subsistence, employment, wholesome exercise, and air to its numerous inhabitants; the surplus vegetables should be sold at the markets along with the fruit, and the nurseries would be productive of the most general improvement to the country, affording in a few years extensive resources of submitting many of our large uncultivated wastes, to the general growth of timber, which would yield at no remote period, the great rudiments of our National

defence, the glorious bulwark of our common country. As the Irish oak has been immortalized in Westminster Abbey, so would it be instrumental on a future day, to enlarge the maritime supremacy of the United Empire. Let statesmen view this proposition in its true light, and they will unanimously, if friends to Ireland and humanity, countenance these Asylums, which shall contain the ground work of this great National object. From these nurseries all the neighbouring gentlemen and landholders, could readily procure the young trees they may require, where an abundance of hands, and proper superintendence, would make them proportionably cheap. The care seedlings require, and the danger of cattle trespassing on them, deter many persons of moderate means, from rearing them; and this care checks the improvement of the country.\*

Next to the gardens and nurseries, the growth of hemp and-flax in suitable situations, afford great resources of profitable employment, under judicious management and the fostering encouragement of the Linen Board, great and substantial benefits may be derived not only

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\* When we consider the endeavours of the Irish Legislature to encourage the planting of Timber Trees in Ireland, and their unsuccessful results, we must lament the ill progress of a measure designed so materially to improve the state of the Country.

to the Asylums, but to the Nation at large from the more extensive culture and manufacture of those great staple commodities, of Flax in particular, the growth of which is so general through the Country, and so genial to the climate.

Persons of acknowledged experience should be solicited to devise proper plans for regulating these important branches of employment at the Asylums, that nothing should be trusted to the suggestions of the ignorant, and uninformed; but under the direction of such a competent Gentleman as the Inspector General of Licens<sup>e</sup> for three provinces of Ireland, great advantages may be expected, and such Poor as are able to work, may provide for their own support by their own exertions, directed to this important object through a national capital, and the skill of individuals resulting from practice.

Various are the other branches of industry and enterprize that may be introduced into these Asylums. The manufacture of Cordage and Canvas near the sea ports, would afford a most important branch of employment; as would the picking of Oakum, and drawing Yarns for relaid Cordage.

In the interior of the country, the manufacture of coarse woollens offer a useful source of industry, as well as the making of straw plats, &c.

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\* PETER BESNARD, Esquire of Douglas, near Cork.



with baskets ; for the materials of which, it would be essential to have a few acres of ground, if suitable, allotted to the growth of twigs.

Into these Asylums it would be useless to introduce any complicated, or intricate machinery, which could only be managed by ingenious or scientific men, all manufacturers having their own peculiar processes and inventions. But all articles that can be manufactured from cheap materials and by a simple process, and that afford a prospect of a *ready market*, are what must be most eligible in those Asylums. A ware-room should be established in each for the reception and sale of all the articles manufactured.

In the disposal of the fruits of the manufactures at the Asylums, the public departments may be instrumental in contracting with the managers, for the manufacture of soldiers, and seamen's shoes, slop clothing, &c.—for the supply of our foreign colonies, all of which articles could be advantageously manufactured in most of the Institutions. The security of the payment for those articles, thus purchased by Government, would greatly add to the permanent stability of the prosperous industry of the Institutions, whose local situation, should be convenient to such supplies, as may be occasionally required. But it may be urged, that Government thus countenancing the Poor in those Institutions,

would militate against the interest of several individuals, who have been in the habit of contracting for those articles. This must be admitted ; but it is just that all private concerns should be subservient to great National Objects, *and that the interest of a few should not be put in competition with the interest of many.*

The beneficial employment of the Poor appears an object of peculiar difficulty, especially at this period of general distress and embarrassment. But as the plan suggested has a powerful tendency to “ vivify the country, not in details but in generals, not at extremities, but at the heart,” the Legislature will probably in their wisdom consider this crisis the most seasonable for the undertaking, inasmuch as it totally relieves every struggling portion of the community from any fresh taxes, and it obliges the affluent who can best afford it, to maintain the Poor ; and only that portion of the affluent, whose situation in life operates against expenses, suitable to their properties.

Those that are not acquainted with the wide extending calamities in Ireland, may look on the suggestions of the writer, as quite chimerical and not called for by the distress of the Poor.

If those persons were to divest themselves of their own enjoyments, for a few hours in each day, and view the abodes of extreme wretchedness,

and the various miseries incident to the want of shelter, food and clothing, they would not look with a callous mind to this humble appeal on the part of so many thousands of our perishing fellow creatures. It is not even in behalf of such objects of affliction alone, that these letters have been submitted to the public, but it is in behalf of every child of sorrow or misfortune, and of which we have so many cases daily occurring.

Ah! little think the gay licentious proud,  
Whom pleasure, power, and affluence surround;  
They, who their thoughtless hours in giddy mirth  
And wanton, often cruel, riot waste;

Ah! little think they, while they dance along,  
How many feel this very moment, death,  
And all the sad variety of pain:

How many sink in the devouring flood  
Or more devouring flame; how many bleed  
By shameful variance betwixt man and man;  
How many pine in want, and dungeon's glooms  
Shut from the common air, and common use  
Of their own limbs; how many drink the cup  
Of baleful grief, or eat the bitter bread  
Of misery; sore pierced by wintry winds,  
How many shrink into the sordid hut  
Of cheerless poverty—

An English Gentleman\* of extensive information who was travelling in Ireland has given an illustration of some casualties, that have occurred, which most feelingly evinces the necessity of a Parliamentary inquiry, and a general provision for

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\* JOSHUA KERBY TRIMMER, Esquire.

the Poor of Ireland, and shows to what objects the proposed Asylums should afford a refuge, or, what may be as essential, weekly relief.

“An industrious poor labourer, whose occupation was quarrying stone, unfortunately had both his hands blown off at the wrists, by a premature blast of the rock. He had a wife and numerous young family, unable to earn food for him or themselves.”

“From the bounty of a public body, who owned the property, he was allowed gratuitously to take stone from the quarry and dispose of it, but in consequence of the very low price the material bore, and the uncertain demand for it, he could not afford to pay a labourer for assisting him. I have seen him toiling daily, with an iron crow placed between the stumps of his arms, to rend asunder the fragments of rock. The quarry however, shortly afterwards failed, and so did his hard earned bread; his countenance then exhibited such a picture of distress and famine, as it is painful to remember.”

The travellers between Cork and Bandon must know a similar instance, where a poor man totally lost his sight by the premature blast of a quarry, and was obliged to beg on the centre of Killeada hill.

“A journeyman Carpenter, by his industry and good conduct, maintained, till of late, a wife and

four small children, in a comfortable and very decent manner. During the hot weather last summer, he threw aside a flannel waistcoat, which he had been accustomed to wear, and omitting to resume it early in the winter, was seized with a violent cold, which brought on a rapid decline; in the last stage of which, he now languishes, and by the time, when in all probability he will have drawn his last breath, his poor wife will have added another to her helpless offspring."

In the parish where the writer of these letters resides, he has known the father of five young children, their only support, seized in the month of January with a typhus fever, his brother who was totally blind, lying in the same fever alongside of him, on a sop of dirty straw. The roof of thatch on the miry hovel 10 feet by 8, admitting both wind and rain, the poor children playing near the embers of a furze fire, while their unfortunate mother was begging among her neighbours for their relief. The exertions of a few benevolent persons, and the care of the Medical Attendant of the Dispensary happily restored, under the kindness of Providence, the two men to their families. But the poor children in the same hovel, were subsequently attacked with the natural small pox, one of whom died, and the other has unfortunately become totally blind.

In the town of Cove, a poor family last summer



were attacked with a violent fever, and in that state, placed by the owner of their habitation, at the gate of a gentleman of rank and fortune,\* whose amiable lady provided at her own expense for their distress.

“Let those simple facts speak for themselves; they are no solitary cases, but such as constantly and ever will occur—cases with which a populous country must teem, and which plead more forcibly, than any reasoning of the writer, the necessity of some provision being made for the Poor, beyond the uncertain supply of voluntary contributions.”

“What likewise can be said to the cases of mendicity? A stranger passing through a strange town, is assailed by a number of miserable objects, decrepid, ghastly, half naked, and apparently half famished; many of them scarcely retaining the semblance of human beings: some driven to it by pressing want—others preferring it from idleness; but he cannot discriminate between them. If he gives to a few, perhaps the most worthless have from him, by their clamorous importunity, that bounty which he designed for those who were truly objects of it, could he have selected them.”

“His means will rarely permit him to spare something for them all; if they did, he would but

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\* Vice Admiral Sir HERBERT SAWYER, K. C. B.

be encouraging idleness and dissipation by giving it. If he passes by the whole, his heart will perhaps afterwards be torn by the reflection, that a fellow creature may have perished from the want of what he could well, or at least with a little self denial have spared, had he but known how to distribute it. It would be needless to inquire of any them, "which is your parish, and why are you not removed into it?" For alas! all parishes are alike to them, except that they must prefer one, in which they can have the greatest chance of exciting charity"—Thus are all the places of public resort actually infested with beggars, many of whom adopting this idle course, become professed rogues, and a great national grievance. By the remedies for these calamities so fully stated, the idle and dissipated would then be driven to labour, or at any rate, they would no longer be suffered to remain at large, a pest to society, nor to rob those of relief who would be industrious, had they the ability to be so.

In the internal arrangements of the Asylums, overstrained humanity should not exceed the just bounds of the most prudent economy. A necessary discipline must be exercised by the superintendents, and no laxity or inattention should be permitted in their entire management. Even in trifles the system should be scrupulously minute, for it is in what are commonly trifling defects, the

chief evils of all public Institutions consist. The superintendent, for the better observance of his duties, should be a gentleman of experience, domestic habits of life, and accustomed to early hours. If married, and his wife would condescend to assist him in his duties, how effective such assistance must be! As before said, it is ladies that best know all the minutiae of the miseries of human life, and if disengaged from extensive family cares, how easy to themselves, would their attention be to the concerns of the Poor!

With what facility has the Government of the United Kingdom, raised immense sums for war-like purposes? Necessary as these sums may have been, the necessity of ameliorating the situation of the Irish Poor, is perhaps as obvious; at all events it may be productive of more essential and permanent benefit to the Empire, for it will produce a spirit of conciliation and affection between the lower and higher orders; the one class will get more enlightened and more obedient to the laws, and the other will be more respected and beloved. *The coercive system unavoidably adopted, from the want of exercising the means of benevolence will cease, and positive benefits will gradually supplant notorious evils.*

The next letter will contain some suggestions respecting the County Penitentiaries, as connected with those Institutions, so far as they afford



effective means of establishing a wholesome system of punishment, by useful labour and solitary confinement; which system may not accord with the general plan of benevolence, philanthropy, and feeling for inoffensive habits that should exist at the Asylums.

A TRUE FRIEND TO IRELAND.

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## SIXTH LETTER,

### ON THE SUBJECT OF THE POOR OF IRELAND.

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*Necessity of establishing Penitentiaries obvious.—Employment should be provided for convicts; a large tract of land required; mode of procuring it suggested.—Proportion of it to each County.—Grand Juries to select situations.—Architects to be employed to execute plans.—A plan of security for refractory Convicts necessary.—Plan of general employment.—Political Observations.—Transportation to New Holland considered, also its enormous expense.—Conduct of Foreign Powers in excluding British Manufactures.—Reaction necessary on the part of Government.—The growth of Flax and Hemp further considered.—Its culture likely to animate our Agriculture.—Rents to Landlords and Tenants.—A Military Guard necessary at the Penitentiaries.—Female Convicts to be kept separate from the Males.—Distinguishing Marks.—Power of Pardon to be vested in the Lord Lieutenant.—The relative state of the Asylums and Penitentiaries considered.—Governors of Penitentiaries should be allowed means of rewarding Convicts for good conduct, and encouraging them to industry, and the hopes of liberty.—Genius though confined to the Person of a Pauper, a Lunatic, or a Convict not to be despised.—Happy results anticipated from the adoption of Penitentiaries.—Hopes entertained by the Writer of Government attending to his suggestions.*

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE  
**CORK ADVERTISER.**

SIR,

The danger of intermixing all the characters at the Asylums, which may be objects of relief or correction, appeared so improvident from the apprehension of disseminating contagion, and immediately spreading through the country the infection of idleness and immorality, that it is deemed more advisable to resort to a General County Work House and Penitentiary for the reception of all vicious and depraved characters, which the indulgence arising from philanthropic feelings, may render unfit associates for those of inoffensive habits.

In this view, and perhaps it is not an incorrect one, it would be advisable for the Grand Juries of each county, to make choice of a large tract of land, whose situation may render it of easy attainment, and as near as may be to the centre of the country, and that should contain a plentiful supply of water and stones, and a soil not altogether incapable of improvement. The land being thus selected, the Grand Jury should be empowered to authorise the High Sheriff to summon a competent jury of freeholders, each paying county rates for one hundred acres of

land, to view and value the ground so selected at an annual rent ; and the proprietors of the land, the occupying tenants, and the guardians of minors, or the executors of proprietors, shall be obliged to make leases of said lands, in perpetuity, to trustees for the annual value so determined on by said Jury, legally assembled and sworn.

The land should be as nearly as possible in the proportion of fifty English acres for every ten thousand English acres contained in each county.

The most convenient site for erecting the penitentiary, should be fixed on by the Grand Jury or a Committee thereof. And proper Architects should be invited to furnish plans, elevations and estimates for the buildings,

A large piece of ground about twenty or thirty acres, should be inclosed with a wall of fifteen feet high, for the employment of the most refractory Convicts or other prisoners in the culture of vegetables and in nurseries for seedling trees.

The ground outside this inclosure may be appropriated for raising potatoes, corn, &c, as may be suitable to the soil, and where Convicts under proper superintendence and security may be allowed to work, as is the case at Woolwich and Portsmouth. When this

ground shall be brought into a state of cultivation it may be submitted to the culture of hemp, flax, and the growth of trees, the seedlings for which were previously raised in the nurseries.

The growth of hemp and flax affording in the spring and summer a source of employment out of doors, would in the winter afford the most essential employment within. All the Convicts would by degrees become the growers of the raw materials of manufacture, and in a short time they would be manufacturers themselves, and wear the clothes that were raised by their industry, and made with their own hands. And thus by being turned to useful employment instead of being a grievous burthen to the state, there would be a lively prospect of their being in a few years almost independent of public support. Let statesmen view this plan, let them compare it with the expense of transportation to a colony at the extremity of the Globe, let them ascertain the positive expense of such transportation, from authentic documents, within their reach, and above all let them consider the effects of having such extensive means of raising at so easy an expense the great staple articles of Irish manufacture. Let them view the menacing system of exclusion to British manufactures, now adopted by Russia and America. And let those principles of exclusion from their markets meet

a reaction in the policy and good sense of the great councils of the nation. And if these Powers persevere in making their countries independent of our industry, let us persevere and make our country independent of their supplies of the rough materials. The employment of convicted felons and idle and disorderly vagrants now transported, or suffered to be a pest to society, or to linger in our prisons, disgusted with their existence, would have a happy tendency to this highly important national object. Flax and hemp have both been proved to be genial to our climate, and their more general introduction is a subject of congratulation to every patriot; they are articles of culture less liable to damage from overholding than any other, even should we at any time grow a quantity beyond our internal consumption or export.

In the County of Cork, the increase of the growth of flax has been great latterly, and the price has not met that severe depression which corn has experienced. In the south of this county, in the year 1814, there were 3600 acres sown, with 500 hogsheads of American and 50 hogsheads of home saved seed, and in the autumn of the same year there were 780 hogsheads of seed saved, which was of equal quality with any imported. In the Barony of East Muskerry, native seed has been sown for a period of 15 years, and

the quality of the flax has been on inspection, proved to be superior to any raised from foreign seed. As this information is from official returns, the Empire at large has reason to rejoice at this cheering prospect, of this branch of Irish agriculture, the general state of which is still so torpid and so uncomfortable, both to the proprietor and cultivator of the soil. The one acting, in too many instances, with a suicide system of avarice, neither giving or taking, and the other kept in a state of bondage and vassalage, dependant on the whims and caprices of their Landlords, and not always on their liberality and good sense.

For the due protection and safe keeping of the Convicts, &c. in these Penitentiaries, it would be necessary to have a suitable military guard, who should have the charge of all the working parties.

The female Convicts should be kept in separate apartments from the male, and obliged to work in the fields, &c. as may be required. Both males and females should be supplied with appropriate clothing, distinguishing by strips of cloth on the back, the years of their confinement, and those that were for life, could be distinguished with the letter L.

The Lord Lieutenant should have full power of pardoning such felons, whose good conduct represented to him by the report of the monthly meeting of Magistrates at the Penitentiary, may

induce him to do so. Such felons so pardoned may be removed from the Penitentiary to the Asylums, to give further proof of their returning to moral and industrious habits before they are finally let loose on society. And, all *vice versa*, refractory persons at the Asylums, should be sent to the Penitentiary, where a wholesome system of correction may restore them to the Asylums improved in their conduct. Thus the Penitentiaries would be held up at the Asylums, as a terror to those that are badly inclined, and the Asylums would be held up to those at the Penitentiaries as a probationary place for their gradual return to society and their friends.

The Governors of the Penitentiaries should be persons of great competency, and well experienced in the exercise of prudent authority, their character should be unexceptionable in every respect, because it is by the happy influence of example, that the best effects may emanate to the many unfortunates committed to their paternal care.

In the performance of the work of the several Convicts, the governor should be allowed to apportion to them a small allowance of their produce according as the merits and industry of each individual may justly entitle them to it. Cleanliness should be encouraged by every possible means, and if at any time, through the



deficiency of raw materials, and a long continuance of bad weather, their should be a want of useful employment, the governor should have recourse to even useless work, to keep their hands and minds engaged. Every encouragement should be held forth to the inhabitants of the Penitentiaries, by allowing the governors to purchase for the ingenious persons the means of exercising their abilities in the more refined productions of art. Many of the French prisoners of war were enabled by these means, and a persevering spirit of mechanism peculiar to the natives of France, to take home large sums of money, the produce of their industry and application. This spirit should meet a similar impulse in all our public Institutions, and genius, though confined to the person of a Pauper, a Lunatic or a Convict, should not be permitted to slumber in indolence or vice, for want of a trifling stimulus acquired at a trifling expense. Such habits fostered in those receptacles of guilt, would be productive ultimately of the best effects, and the unhappy Convict by such enlightened means, may become a future ornament to his country, and a grateful friend to the state, who in dealing just punishment on him for his misconduct, afforded him the blessings of hope and the chance of being still useful to the world. There would be more real benefit to the state from the amend-

ment of such Convicts in their native country, than there could be in their promoting the population of a colony, that at no remote period may become as independent of their parent state, as those colonies that have thrown off their ties of affection and gratitude, and twice declared themselves our powerful and most energetic enemies.

The writer has shewn in these letters some general instances of extensive misery and distress, he has pointed out effectual means of relieving them, through the entire extent of the country, he has submitted ample, patriotic and practicable funds for supporting those means, and while every individual who knows and feels for the woes of this distressed portion of the Empire, should exert himself in ameliorating as far as in his power, a state so revolting to humanity, he humbly hopes that this great amelioration, so much sought after, will emanate from the administration, who appear to be well acquainted with the actual situation of the country, and to listen with some attention to the humble suggestions of

A TRUE FRIEND OF IRELAND.

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## SEVENTH LETTER,

### ON THE SUBJECT OF THE

# POOR OF IRELAND.

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*Allusion to the public Charities in Ireland.—Report of the Board of Education in Ireland.—Report of the select Committee of the House of Commons on the Education of the lower orders of the Metropolis, agreeing with the writer's suggestion in the 3rd letter.—Abuses in public Charities; necessity of the powers of a Parliamentary commission being extended to Ireland.—Their powers should be extensive.—The writer's ideas bear an analogy to Dean SWIFT's suggestions respecting Beggars in Dublin.—The situation of the poor admitted by the Quarterly Reviewers to require being bettered.—True picture of the Peasantry in the past and present state of Ireland.—Their miseries mainly arising from the aristocracy of the gentry.—SWIFT of the same opinion in 1737.—Apprehensions that the legislature may not be sufficiently informed of the extent of the existing distress.—Patience of the Poor under their severe afflictions.—Hopes of their condition being on the eve of improvement.*

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The writer is induced from various circumstances which have occurred, to attract the attention of Parliament, to the state of the public Institutions in Ireland, particularly to those sup-

ported by charitable donations and bequests. To more clearly elucidate the necessity of this attention, he begs leave to refer to the 13th report of the Board of Education in Ireland, extracts from which will be found in the annexed addenda, and which prove most fully the necessity that exists of the legislature the ensuing session, carrying into effect the recommendation of the select Committee of the House of Commons, on the Education of the lower orders in the metropolis, (of the date of the 20th June 1816,) where they state that "although your Committee have not been instructed to examine the state of Education beyond the metropolis, they have, in addition to what has appeared in evidence, received communications, which shew the necessity of Parliament as speedily as possible, instituting an inquiry into the management of charitable donations, and other funds for the instruction of the Poor of this country, and into the state of their Education generally, especially in the larger towns: and your Committee are of opinion, that the most effectual as well as the most expensive mode of conducting such an inquiry, would be by means of a Parliamentary Commission."

The 3rd letter of this treatise which was originally published in the Cork Advertiser, prior to the above report, contains a similar suggestion; no doubt exists, but that many of our public cha-

rities in Ireland have been, and still continue to be abused, and that some individuals have been, or probably still are, more attentive to their own, and their friends advantage, than to the interests of the Foundations, for which they were, or are Trustees.\* However it is very fortunate for the charities in Cork, that they reckon among their managers, three enlightened, able and active Clergymen† of the Established Church, who do not sleep on their posts, and by whose exertions large funds are in progress of restoration to those Charities.‡

Should the recommendation of the select Committee of the last Session be acted on, there can be no doubt but that the wisdom of Parliament will liberally extend the powers of the Commission to Ireland, where abuses have been as extensive, as in Great Britain; and where any man who acts from public spirited motives in checking them, is too often vilified as an informer, or insulted as an enthusiast.

The Parliamentary Commission should not be limited to persons resident in Dublin, but should

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\* See Report of the Board of Education in Ireland.

† The Reverend WILLIAM THOMPSON, Archdeacon of Cork, the Reverend JOHN QUARRY, Rector of St. Mary Shandon, and the Reverend JOHN FORTESCUE, Rector of St. Nicholas, Cork.

‡ See Appendix.

comprehend some of the most active, well informed and independent Gentlemen in every County, and every City and Town in Ireland, who should be named by Parliament in their Commission, and who should correspond and make their reports to a central Board in Dublin. But the Commissioners should previously be furnished with full powers to examine all documents under certain heavy penalties, that they should not have occasion to report as the Board of Education were obliged to do, respecting the Blue Coat Hospital in Cork, whose benevolent founder endowed it with such an ample property, now so truly unproductive. This Charity so nobly provided for, by Doctor WORTH, would, if the funds were appropriated according to his benevolent intention, amply provide for the Education of all the Sons of the numerous decayed Citizens of Cork. But unfortunately there are many very serious impediments existing against the restoration of this large estate to its original purposes, as by subsequent demises, however erroneous they may be, the properties of hundreds of unoffending individuals appear to be implicated in the result. A Parliamentary Commission however, may be enabled to make arrangements equitable to all parties, and productive to the Charity in question. The reports of the Board of Education in Ireland, sufficiently evidence the necessity

which exists of extending the powers of a Parliamentary Commission to Ireland.

There are also urgent motives for placing all the charities in Ireland, supported by Grand Jury Presentments, under the immediate superintendence and control of permanent Committees of Grand Juries from Assizes to Assizes, and which has been suggested to the select Committee of the House of Commons on Irish Grand Jury Presentments. Independent of the check on abuses which may be effected through this mode, it may probably not be unwise to constitute the central Board in Dublin, also, a Board for the revision of every Public Charity in Ireland, and for framing such rules and regulations for them, as circumstances may require.

Dean SWIFT's celebrated letter respecting giving badges to the Beggars in all the Parishes of Dublin, contains many excellent remarks, so apposite to the subject of this treatise, though written so many Years since, that the writer strongly recommends its being carefully perused, and compared to the evils of the present day.

The same grievances complained of by SWIFT, have existed in Ireland since the days which he wrote, and for which no remedy was ever effectually acted on. The Dean has well remarked that "all necessaries of life grow in the Country and not in Cities, and are cheaper where they

grow.\* This fact is strongly in favour of the writer's plan. Besides a number of unfortunate

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\* The Dublin Correspondent, a Newspaper of distinguished celebrity has brought the subject of mendicity in Dublin before the Public in a very able manner, The Editor of this paper urges the necessity of Legislative interference in the state of the Irish Poor, in the following strong language.

"The respective parishes of this city, we understand, are to hold vestries to consult upon the best measures for the relief of their respective poor. The vestry for the parish of St. Peter will be held on Friday next. While attention is thus laudably directed towards the relief of the Poor, it would be a most desirable thing, if it extended farther than mere temporary necessities seem to call for, and if it were to search after some permanent scheme for relieving this city, altogether from the loathsome weight of its mendicant poor. A more odious and a more pernicious nuisance than the street-begging of Dublin, does not exist in the world. It is a flagrant shame—a desperate abomination, with which the spirit of the citizens and the labour of the Legislature should grapple, with the resolve never to desist until the nuisance be abated for ever. The profligacy and blasphemy belonging to the practitioners in the lucrative avocation of street-begging, are prodigious—and the ears of young and innocent people are often doomed to hear sallies of blasphemy, and rhapsodies of grossness, that call for exemplary punishment, and not for the benefactions of charity. If the street mendicancy of Dublin continues much longer, it will bid fair to extinguish all sympathy for distress—for fraud and wickedness are so obviously compounded, at present, with the system of public begging which prevails, that disgust and indignation are at once provoked, and those feelings also,



beings cooped up as they now are, in thronged poor houses in Cities in Ireland, generate idleness and infection which end in the extremes of misery and death. Place the poor in their native

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the repetition of which are the least favourable to practicable benevolence. Surely this monstrous inconvenience is not of an insurmountable nature. Surely there must be some practicable way of redeeming the public from this filthy burthen—and if there be, there is nothing which so urgently calls for the interference of the public good sense and public vigour. Belfast has not a beggar in its streets—Dublin has hundreds in every street: an abandoned and miscreant race, who levy contributions, upon females especially, as a right. How come this to pass? Not a beggar in Belfast—thousands in the metropolis? Most anxiously do we recommend this subject to the consideration of the vestries which are about to be assembled. It is really well entitled to their most anxious thoughts.”

This added to every man's experience is sufficient to urge the Legislature to adopt the plan of the Rural Asylums “for as SWIFT says all necessities of life grow in the country, and not in cities and towns, and are cheaper where they grow.” No mendicants should be allowed in our streets and highways, all should be removed to the Asylums in their native districts which would effectually obviate the evil of mendicity in Dublin, and all other large towns. While the Poor-Houses and Houses of Industry in the cities and towns will afford ample accommodation to their native Poor, with the addition of the Rural Asylums in their liberties. Some of the unoccupied Barracks may answer for the Asylums, particularly if land of suitable extent can be procured attached to them.

districts, and in some degree dependent for their comforts on their own industry, and the evil will be removed which produced the severe irony of SWIFT, who stated that *"a great part of our public miseries is originally owing to our own faults (but what those faults are, I am grown by experience too wary to mention) so I am confident that among the meaner people, nineteen in twenty of those who are reduced to a starving condition, did not become so, by what the lawyers call the work of God, either upon their bodies or goods; but merely from their own idleness, attended with all manner of vices, particularly drunkenness, thievery, and cheating."*

To introduce permanent means of relieving abject and helpless indigence, of giving a stimulus to honest industry, and of checking mendicity which leads to vice, are the main objects of the writers exertions. These are shown to be attainable in a capacious extent, and in a manner which must be gratifying to every friend of humanity. SWIFT was a charitable and a great man, "his influence, like his writings has survived a century, his wisdom was practical," and his advice urged in the eighteenth century may be followed in the nineteenth, under the energies of a benevolent Administration, on whom Religion has shed its benign influence, and in their emulation of the virtues of SWIFT, our country may be redeemed from its present distress.

The Quarterly Review, a work supposed to be edited by some gentlemen said to be possessed of the confidence of government has been referred to in the first letter, which work ably advocates the cause of the poor of the British Empire. In the further promotion of this object, it states *"let us not deceive ourselves ; governments are safe in proportion as the great body of the people are contented, when they work with the prospect of want and pauperism before their eyes, as what must be their destiny at last, if you would secure the state from within as well as from without, you must better the condition of the poor."*\* This is an admission that the condition of the poor requires to be bettered ; the difficulties have been always great. but nevertheless they are not insurmountable, the Author of the Past and Present State of Ireland has urged, that in Ireland there was no Yeomanry—no agricultural capitalist ; no degree between the landlord and labourer ; the words "pesantry" and "poor" synonymously employed, if this was the case, which in a great measure it was in 1810, what must it be in 1816. Many of the respectable occupying tenants (which from the class of Yeomanry in England) are become inhabitants of our prisons. The great reduction in the produce of lands, and rents of houses have led to this catastrophe ;

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\* Quarterly Review, No. 29, page 200.

while the landlords demand head rents which the produce of land, and the exertions of industry are unequal to yield, hence a prison is the asylum of an Irish tenant and the landlord in many cases, possesses himself of the fruits of his industry, his past labour and capital, so unfortunately expended, while the families of the tenant largely add to the list of our paupers, and actually make the words peasantry and poor of equal signification. Even in better days than the present, "the actual cultivator was seldom better paid than by the scanty food, ragged raiment, and a miry hovel: nothing saved for exigencies nothing remitted for capital.—The peasant and the land alike neglected, impoverished, and starved." The theorist says, this, like other commerce will find its level, *Experience says to the theorist, it will not.* The peasants spirit is broken—he thinks not of independence,—dreams not of property, unless in dreams of insurrection, his wishes have no scope; he is habituated to derive from his land and his labour only his daily potato; and we know, that competitors offer the whole value of the produce, minus that daily potato—sometimes more than the whole value is promised, and nothing paid; the tenant, for a few months, appeases his hunger; quarter day approaches,—he absconds; and the absentee landlord in Dublin or London,

exclaims at the knavery of an Irish tenant. The agents of such estates as are solely engaged in encreasing and collecting rents, can have little conciliatory power with the people,\* and more particularly when they are not resident among them. The extensive pauperism resulting from this evil, cannot be directly attributed to the government; much of it is due to the aristocracy of the gentry, and their disregard to the sufferings of their fellow creatures. The remedy must be sought in a more liberal mode of acting among the landed interest, by their reverting to rents for their estates warranted to be paid out of the produce of the soil, by the prices of produce obtained before the year 1793.

SWIFT justly said, "that persons in coaches and chairs bear but little of the persecution we (that is meaning people in the humbler walks of life) suffer, and are willing to leave it entirely upon us." Now this reminds the writer of an anecdote that occurred at the house of a very worthy Member of Parliament, who was chatting over the subject of the distress of the Poor in his comfortable mansion, which never partook of want or distress, and in the neighbourhood of which, all his dependents were ignorant of the miseries of abject poverty. They had abundance of potatoes his woods and park liberally supplied

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\* Past and Present State of Ireland.

them with fire, and his dairies with milk. The amiable females of the Senator provided clothing for the poorest of the young and aged, while the family medicine chest was their apothecaries shop. Under such easy and happy circumstances all around partook of the content enjoyed by their benevolent master, who feeling no distress among his people, considered this picture of the miseries of the Poor, too overstrained, and not sanctioned by the necessity of the case. As many other worthy Senators, may have similar ideas, and as the writer hopes, that when the state of our Poor shall be submitted to Parliament, that there shall be a complete union of sentiment on the subject; he told the good man in question, when he next visited any of our towns, that if he would condescend to inspect the lanes and courts therein, he would then see misery and wretchedness in the extreme; he would see age and infancy in rags, without a solitary rugg to protect them from the inclemency of the seasons; he would see the famishing parent weeping over the corpse of its child, that had already breathed its last from the want of nourishment, to maintain the vital spark in so helpless a frame; he would see multiform distress reducing the lower orders to countenances scarcely human, and he would see many suffering these misfortunes, with a calm and pious resignation; he would see many in

those cities and towns, still driving in splendid equipages, and as he was, surrounded by every comfort and elegance, which render life enviable, "and who as SWIFT said were willing to leave the persecution of the poor entirely upon us." To know the extent of human woe, it has become necessary in order to satisfy the rich, that they should put on the humble garb of the humane HOWARD, view the miseries which he viewed, and relieve the wretchedness which he relieved. These words made the worthy member sensible of the general wretchedness of the Poor, and will no doubt make him their friend in Parliament. The writer was happy in having it in his power to make so good a man a convert to his reasoning, and he humbly hopes that all others who have thought as he has, will now think as he does; if he succeeds by this humble attempt in effecting this change of sentiment, where it is necessary to do so, the bettering the condition of the Poor is fast approaching its happy progress.





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## RECONSIDERATION

*Of the various suggestions contained in this*

### P L A N.

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#### FIRST.

##### *Asylums for the Indigent.*

In a Country like Ireland, where misery is so extensive, and the ability of the Inhabitants unfortunately so inadequate to its general relief, no doubt exists, but that it is the imperious duty of the Legislature to provide suitable resources for the incompetency of helpless old age, the incapacities arising from accident, and from mental or bodily infirmities.

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#### SECONDLY.

##### *Asylums for Orphans and Foundling Children.*

When the situation of thousands of helpless and unprotected Infants is considered, humanity loudly calls for the interference of the Legislature, towards these most pitiable and interesting objects of human misery. Many are to be seen in all parts of Ireland, deprived of their parents at a very early age, and thrown on the humanity of the poor people in the neighbourhood, for

their miserable maintenance; while many more of a still more pitiable class, are abandoned by their unnatural parents to all the horrors and miseries of nakedness and want. Of these evils the present state of Ireland affords numerous distressing instances. Let the effects of liberality and education circulate through the country, and these causes of unhappiness and moral turpitude will be greatly diminished. An allusion has been made before to the beneficial consequences resulting to society in Scotland, from the zeal of the Clergy in that country. *The Irish Farmers' Journal*, of the 30th November, a weekly paper of extensive circulation, which abounds with information of great practical utility, contains an admirable letter on the subject of education in Ireland, and which is so highly creditable to the writer, and so useful to the public, that it is now inserted.

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### ON SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE  
IRISH FARMERS' JOURNAL.

SIR,

It is a very general observation, that the methodists increase, and that the established religion of this kingdom is endangered by the rapid augmentation of this body of professing chris-

tians. The present writer, who is wholly unconnected with methodists, endeavoured to trace the causes of this very important fact, and is induced to think that the most striking cause is the great attention which they uniformly pay to education. In Liverpool (see Mr. SOWERBY on Sunday Schools) they are educating 1033—in Whitehaven 500 and upwards—in Workington almost 200—in Maryport 100—in Carlisle 250—in Penrith upwards of 100. The same spirit characterises them in every part of the Island, and in this point of view, considering their numbers, they may justly be regarded with esteem by every one that calls upon the name of Christ. It is certain the addition to their numbers last year was more than 12,000; all of whom we have a right to consider as the firm friends of education. Why do not other dissenters display the same character?—"To outreach, outpray, and outlive" the various classes of dissenting christians is the only plan which christianity and philosophy recommend to the established clergy of this kingdom.

*This is not a period for the continuance of party spirit.* All classes, all denominations ought to rally round the standard of benevolence, sympathy and love, without suffering their minds to be perverted or their hearts to be hardened by the shibboleth of factions or of sects. The

value of education is proved beyond contradiction by the following facts, which alone ought to determine the decisions of genuine patriots. The character of the people of Scotland in 1698 is thus drawn by FLETCHER, of Saltoun, (see *Political Works of ANDREW FLETCHER*, 8vo. London, 1737, page 144.) "There are at this time in Scotland, (says he) two hundred thousand people begging from door to door, and though the number of them be perhaps double what it was formerly, by reason of this present great distress, (a famine then prevailed) yet in all times there have been about one hundred thousand of these vagabonds, who have lived without any regard or subjection either to the laws of the land, or even those of God and nature." He asserts that no magistrate could discover that they had been baptized, or in what way one in a hundred went out of the world. He accuses them as frequently guilty of robbery, and sometimes of murder. "In years of plenty (he adds) many thousands of them meet together in the mountains, where they feast and riot for many days—and at country weddings, markets, burials and their other public occasions, they are to be seen, both men and women, perpetually drunk, cursing, fighting and blaspheming together."

Now, it will appear quite evident to all who

are acquainted with the present character of the Scotch nation, that nothing could form a more striking contrast to the manners of the poor in Scotland at this time, than the preceding description—and to what influence is the improvement in their moral condition to be attributed? Solely to the influence of education. On an average of thirty years preceding the year 1797, the executions in North Britain did not amount to six annually, and one quarter session for one town in England has sent more felons to the plantations than all the judges in Scotland usually do in a year. The Scotch peasantry will submit to many privations in order to procure for their children the advantage of instruction, and in return for this, when their children arrive at years of maturity they discover towards their parents a superior degree of filial affection and dutiful regard. In no country is so large a proportion of the wages of labour applied to the support and comfort of those whose days of labour are past.

These facts speak more than volumes of theory; and they demand the close attention of every patriotic Irishman, who desires to restore his country by education to the rank she possesses by nature. At one period she was the light of Europe, and should wise plans be adopted to secure the instruction of the rising generation,

and to establish adult schools, so useful in this kingdom, the horrors of murder could not so frequently be mentioned in your paper. Whoever reflects upon the rapid progress of the bible society in consequence of the union which characterises its friends, and the formation of auxiliary branch societies and associations, must feel satisfied, similar plans in forming and conducting national and British and foreign school societies would bring knowledge into the remotest corner of your land. This is the time to commence such arrangements, and this alone can restore tranquillity and order to a noble, liberal and generous people. Surely Lord Castlereagh and the Duke of Wellington would be ready to afford their utmost assistance to promote, both by their money and example, the instruction of a nation to which they owe their birth, and which calls aloud to the liberator and the negociator of Europe, not to forget their own dear country. "Whence do the laws derive their force and vigour if not from good education, accustoming the minds of subjects to approve and submit to them? Without this precaution they are but a very feeble barrier against the passions of mankind.

*"Quid leges sine moribus vanæ proficiunt."* HOR.

How did Lycurgus perpetuate, during five hundred years, his unnatural constitution? The

*oath*, says Plutarch, (and it is shameful to think the wisest government in christian Europe does not attend to this observation) which he exacted from the Lacædemonians, would have been but a *weak* resource after his death, if he had not taken care, by his regulations about Education, to imprint his laws upon their manners, and to make them suck in with their first milk the love of his polity. A strong proof how much may be effected by the formation of a wise system of education is, that the founder of the college of Geneva so arranged his plans, nearly three hundred years ago, that even Napoleon himself did not attempt to change them. To this institution Geneva has been indebted for that sense of liberty which made the French Emperor observe, when asked why he did not visit this part of his dominions, "that he would go to Genève when he had made himself acquainted with the English language."

*"Doctrina sed vim promovet insulam,*

*"Rectique cultus pectora roborant." HOR.*

F. SIBSON.

Should those extensive rural establishments be undertaken, the Irish Farmers' Journal, from the excellence of the selections contained therein, and from its being so congenial in its machinery to the prosperity of these Institutions, should be received in every one of them. This useful

weekly paper being thus countenanced, would stimulate the proprietors of it, to exert themselves to promote the prosperity of the Institutions by the circulation of useful knowledge. Thus, through this channel of information, a spirit of laudable emulation would be excited among the managers and superintendents of these Charities, and whatever was usefully practised in the North, would be speedily known in the South. The labour and expense attendant on practical economics, would be lightened by the results of experience and from a small annual payment of thirty shillings, hundreds may be saved to each Institution, and the cause of religion, charity, and industry be visibly promoted through the influence of the press.

The Board of Education should extend its laudable efforts and support to promote the progress of knowledge in these Institutions. The funds placed by Parliament at their disposal, would lighten the expense of the establishments. The superintendents at them, should report monthly to this Board, the progress of education in each, while they should also make a general monthly report to the Secretaries of the Grand Juries in each County, for the special information of the public.



## THIRDLY.

*The Local Dispensaries as far as circumstances admit, to be connected with these Asylums.*

Every experienced Medical Person, from the arguments urged in this treatise, must feel the necessity which exists, of the union of the Dispensaries to the Asylums; the subscriptions, with a similar sum presented by the Grand Juries, should still continue to form the support of this branch of the Institutions, but an adequate compensation should be made the Medical Practitioner, for his additional trouble in acting as Deputy Superintendent.

## FOURTHLY.

*Work Houses to be attached to the Asylums.*

As the promotion of industry is the basis of the exertions of the writer, and as it is the foundation of all national prosperity, this subject offers a copious source of commentary. Land being the chief parent of human sustenance, affords extensive means of employment for the poor, who have been hitherto cooped up in Poor Houses in Cities and Towns, or who have so much to the disgrace of civilization and morals infested our Streets. The present Lord Mayor of London, with a judgment and a sense of humanity, that does honour to the head and heart, suggested to His

Majesty's Ministers, that 50,000 acres of waste land might be brought into cultivation in England, by which 20,000 men may be employed.\* If the millions of acres of waste land in Great Britain were employed in this essentially useful object, so much misery would not exist in Spitalfields, nor should we daily see such extensive emigrations from the United Kingdom. This proposition of his Lordship, may probably be the subject hereafter of future consideration on the part of Government; but great and important objects of this nature require the maturest deliberation. The selfishness of individual avarice may often throw great impediments in the way of national amelioration; experience has fully proved, that some proprietors of land, would sooner see thousands of their fellow creatures perish before their eyes, than consent to the appropriation of their property, even on a fair

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\* The Curragh of Kildare which contains a large tract of unemployed land, from its contiguity to the Capital of Ireland, and its proximity to the Grand Canal, would afford ample means of employment and support for the thousands of the poor of Dublin, and the neighbouring districts; there are in many other parts of Ireland similar tracts of land, which contribute but little to the stock of human sustenance, and which the industry of man exercised like Britton Abbots, as so humanely recorded by Sir THOMAS BERNARD, in his *Annals of the Poor*, would largely mitigate the general distress of the Poor of Ireland.

remuneration for the purposes of charity; and Government knowing those impediments are obliged to act with circumspection, and not be committed to assurances, which it may not be in their power to realize. The conduct of some landlords in Ireland, reminds the writer of the story of the dog in the manger, they are unable to cultivate the soil themselves, and are unwilling to make leases to those, on a fair value who are able to do so. Hence we see in this country, immense tracts thrown out of culture, the peasantry unemployed and in a state of insubordination, while the landlords themselves, ignorant of the real situation of their estates, wonder they do not get paid rents, which were exacted through the unfortunate delusive prices obtained for the produce of the soil by the Peninsular War. Since the restoration of peace, we have seen a rage for throwing all our arable land under pasture, and which has greatly added to the agricultural distress. This was different from the policy which actuated our ancestors. History informs us, that they endeavoured to promote the growth of *Man*, but landlords are now desirous to promote the growth of *Beasts*. Providence has this year been pleased to indicate that this system is not pleasing to its dispensations. For the produce of grass lands is low in the extreme, while the produce of

arable lands is alarmingly high. It is evident that the Almighty from his wise purposes has fully shewn, that the affluent must consider the poor as their fellow creatures, and that industrious poverty must not be excluded from its natural rights. Good sense and a knowledge of mutual interests must operate to reduce the ill effects of the despotism of the landed interest, which like the despotism of capital "adds to the miseries of society." This despotism of capital assuredly aggravates the danger to be apprehended from the want of human food, and if the stomach of mankind is allowed to be trafficked on much longer, the wisdom of the Imperial Legislature may resort to the History recorded by Moses, to provide means for preventing future famine devastating the United Kingdom. In the British Ministry, we may find a second Joseph, and many of our numerous barracks, now fortunately rendered useless through the genius of Wellington, may be converted into *National Granaries*. That agriculture may meet due encouragement, Government should never allow the price of wheat fit for bread, to be lower than sixty shillings a quarter, when it reduces to that price, the Government granaries should be opened, and the prophetic wisdom of the Israelitish bondsman in Egypt, should be acted on in Great Britain. Through national means,

and the wisdom of experience we may hereafter be the glorious supporters of Mankind in distress, as we have already been the maritime avengers of the massacre of Christians by Infidels. A few millions of Exchequer Bills appropriated in abundant seasons by Government for the purchase of grain in national granaries, would be the happy means of removing all future apprehensions of scarcity, and our agriculture would be relieved from uncertainty, as to a fair remuneration for the cultivators of the soil. Thus the Bible itself as it teaches us *Religious Wisdom*, would be the direct means of affording us *National Happiness*. It may be said in case, we should grow, as we have done before more corn than we can consume, what is to be done with the quantity in store after the superabundant state of our harvest may be realized? The old grain as it is by far the wholesomest for human sustenance should be first issued from the public granaries to the millers and bakers, and recourse may be had to exportation. By such means and allowing *a free trade in grain*, ample room would be made for the reception of the new crops. The farmers whose interests have been so often sacrificed to the despotism of capital, would thus be cheered into constant industry, which would largely add to agricultural employment. We have abundance of pub-

lic storage for the object suggested, therefore except the addition of corn kilns to some of our Barracks, and securing their lofts against the pressure of weight, there is little other expense required. Some of the Commissariat Department now on half pay, may be employed in this object, and in the wisdom of the measure, there would be always a security against a National famine.

The flagellations of politics or party should not be permitted to be mixed in our endeavours for the improvement of our poor. At the late meeting at the Mansion House in London, the Right Honourable Chairman studiously avoided their introduction. We must enter on our labour for the permanent improvement of the poor of the Empire, unconnected with party views or party purposes. We must consider how our fellow creatures can be effectually relieved, and that we should not annually resort to public subscriptions for what should be a National object.

“ In England as well as in Ireland, there is a continual influx of poor attracted to the Capitals by the allurements of higher wages than the country affords. Many whom those hopes lead from home, soon find out, that they have miscalculated; and in such cases they have no recourse but to the public streets, into which they turn

their wives and children to subsist themselves by mendicity. The poor that infest those Cities in this way, are supplied from every part of England and Ireland, and unless some rational and effective plan be devised for counteracting this evil; either by sending the country poor back again to their districts or by taking the City poor out of the Streets to Asylums destined for their particular support, every great public subscription will act as an attraction to bring mendicants adventurers in numbers to town, at the very time when the burthen of their support must be most irksome." What the Dublin Correspondent alludes to, respecting that City as forcibly applies to London, where our poor Countrymen form the largest portion, with the exception of Spitalfields, of the present misery of the British Metropolis. It may be an object of sound and liberal wisdom when the Legislature shall be engaged in devising a Plan for the relief of our Irish Poor, that they should simultaneously embrace in it, charitable means of restoring the destitute Irish to their native homes, where provisions grow in the country and are consequently much cheaper. Many of the condemned Stores sold at our Dock Yards, and Barrack Depots, would afford the rude materials of clothing and bedding. The writer has known fearnought, green baize, and old hammocks purchased at Plymouth and

Portsmouth which have been distributed to the poor in his neighbourhood, and have served them for shelter from cold. Even from the West Indies bales of condemned seamens clothing, and blankets which were injured by cockroches, have been distributed, and have been thankfully accepted by many of the poor. Such articles at this time of no value to Government, should be judiciously issued from their stores to the poor, in these times of uncommon distress. The writer hopes that government will immediately adopt this idea, and that the Lords of the Admiralty will be pleased to order a few bales to be sent to Ireland, from Plymouth or Portsmouth, for this highly charitable purpose. Sales are constantly occurring at those great depots, therefore before the winter makes any rapid progress in thinning the ranks of our poor, their sufferings from cold may be mitigated, by the use of articles which are lying at present decaying. His Majesty's Ministers in London have afforded such relief to the poor of Spitalfields, and the liberality of Mr. PEEL, has procured similar relief for the poor of the mountainous places near Dublin. These are actions which deserve panegyric for "our light should shine before men, that we should see such good works, and glorify our Father who is in heaven." "Every man in his way should endeavour to imitate them, and such a spirit well



shared amongst the Public, must infallibly bring the country through its difficulties, if they were incomparatively greater in number, and severer in quality, than they are."

But under the immediate circumstances of Ireland, the removal of the Irish poor from London, and other Cities in England to their native homes must be a prospective object. If they were sent here at present, where our pecuniary means are so limited, they would only add to our miseries and perplexities. Land affords us abundant means in embryo, but these means must be well arranged, before we can attempt adding to the present miseries of our superabundant population. Let the Asylums be established, and ground of suitable extent be attached to them, and we shall then be able to receive our native poor, to administer comfort to them all, in this life, and to lay their bones by the side of their forefathers, an object which in its prospect has been always considered desirable by the people of Ireland from their religious tenets, and which, trifling as it may be considered by some, or undeserving of notice, would influence many of the Irish poor to return to their native districts.

We daily see the patriotic exertions of the Linen Board of Ireland encouraging national industry, through national liberality. Their future exertions may be attended with the

happiest effects in the promotion of useful industry in the Asylums. The bounty of Parliament may be shared in promoting the culture and manufacture of Hemp and Flax at these Asylums, where the meeting of the Farming Societies being held, would cheer the industrious poor into fresh exertion.

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#### FIFTHLY.

*Distinct apartments for females.*

This proposition may be extended to Penitentiaries for females for each County, from which, according as they were improved in morals and virtue, they could be removed to the Asylums in their native districts to prepare them for their return to society.

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#### SIXTHLY.

The necessity for Bridewells in each Barony is so obvious, that it is unnecessary to say more on this subject.

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#### SEVENTHLY.

The erection of a spacious room for public purposes is of essential importance to the interest of the Asylums.

## EIGHTHLY.

If Saving Banks for the earnings of the labouring classes of society, were long since established we should not now witness the excess of misery, we daily see. Industry would in these institutions find its best security, and necessity its readiest relief, by the advance of money on adequate security.

## NINTHLY.

Friendly Societies well arranged would be the wisest resource for tradesmen, manufacturers, and the labouring poor, in the days of misfortune sickness, or old age. To them, the widows and orphans of the contributors may with confidence look for certain assistance, when they should be deprived of their support by the hand of death.

## TENTHLY.

Of all charity the relief of the indigent poor in their habitations is the wisest, a few shillings distributed weekly in many instances prevent the necessity of receiving several as inmates in the Asylums. In seasons of great pressure, when, like the present, society may be afflicted with the chastisement of Providence, the issue of provisions, clothing, and fuel, from these charitable

Institutions, would be most pleasing to the feelings of the humane, and would be the best relief. Permission should be given in the Act of Parliament for such laudable disposal. Adequate superintendence, fidelity, and economy in the management of the Institutions, are the great and essential requisites. These I have shown to be attainable, and to insure their permanent efficacy, it will be necessary for candour and fair dealing to display their influence at the meetings of the Committees. Those who are honoured by this nomination, when they perceive grounds of complaint, should immediately notice them, and have them rectified.

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## CONCLUSION.

Since the publication of the letters on the subject of the Poor of Ireland, the distress of the Country has been greatly aggravated by an accumulation of numerous evils; the principal of which arises from the deplorable state of our harvest, the almost total want of a circulating medium, and of confidence between Man and Man. These circumstances must narrow the already limited abilities of the country gentlemen to provide employment for the labouring poor, whose wants and distresses call loudly for legislative assistance. The indigent always derived their greatest relief from the middling classes of society, who knew and felt the wants of their fellow creatures; but unfortunately the pressure of the times has reduced many of this respectable and valuable body to absolute poverty. The innumerable auctions of furniture, the sales of family plate to Silversmiths, and pledges to Pawnbrokers, are melancholy proofs of the truth of this statement. Melancholy as they are, it is fit they should be known, that no false colouring of prosperity should blind the government or the public to the true state of the internal situation of the country.

The writer of these letters does not occupy his

time to deceive or flatter Administration, but he is perfectly satisfied, that when they are assured of the evil, they will provide a remedy, as far as the nature of circumstances will permit, and that they will be entitled to the gratitude of the People, as they are already to their confidence. The misfortunes which have arisen have not proceeded from the government, but from the necessity of the case, and the dispensations of Providence. The picture which the Historian may draw of those times cannot exhibit much internal happiness, however resplendent it may be in national glory. The attainment of this glory has unfortunately added to the privations and sufferings, so deeply felt in the humbler walks of life. But great as those are admitted to be, it is to be hoped they will be but temporary, and that we shall soon experience a happy change. This change however cannot be expected, unless promoted by the good sense of the people, by the humanity of the wealthy, and the energies and vigilance of a benevolent government. These qualities combined, have hitherto carried the British Nation triumphantly through its difficulties, and have placed it on the pinnacle of human grandeur. Possessing these essentials, the country will not sink into apathy or despair, but commence the Godlike purpose of doing good, by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and

providing employment for the labouring poor. Until these first of duties are in a train of national progress, the country cannot expect either happiness, or the blessings of Providence, whose displeasure at our unfeeling conduct has been manifested by its awful visitations of the late dreadful weather, which has thrown our harvest into the winter season, and forced the unhappy husbandman to look on his lost crops, as the shipwrecked mariner views the remnants of his bark split on the rocks of the Ocean, by the relentless storm.

The writer is aware that hitherto the concerns of the poor were never thoroughly mingled in the legislative policy of Ireland. He admits, that Infirmarys, Hospitals, and Dispensaries have been humanely established, but the necessities of the hungry and naked, until reduced to sickness, never were objects of Legislative relief, except in the City of Dublin.

The evils resulting from the poor Laws in England have deterred the Parliamentary Friends of Ireland from investigating the subject; however as "events lead us to experience" we are now prepared to benefit from the practice of the Sister country, by adopting such a vigilant system of superintendence in the proposed Establishments, as will tend to guarantee the permanency of the highly important object in view.

*Charity united with National Industry and Prosperity.*

Such is the ground work of the plan already submitted; but as many have said that its magnitude renders it impracticable, in these times of distress, it is fit to reply to such assertions with arguments resulting from experience. The plan is no doubt capacious, because unless it were so, it could not be general, and all parts of Ireland have equal claims on Legislative consideration; but particularly such places, where the population is most distressed. It would be unwise to deny that the expense would be great. But let those who regard it, view with what facility millions were raised for the destruction of mankind, and will they now withhold a few thousands, a sum comparatively insignificant for the preservation of society, from all the evils of want and despair. "Those evils are fast filling our dungeons with criminals, our gaols with debtors, our limited number of Poor Houses with objects of all descriptions, and our streets and villages, with scenes of human misery, while the dreary dwellings of the indigent, exhibit to the view of those who will condescend to visit them, a still more aggravated picture of distress and sufferings, which are never witnessed without shocking the feelings of humanity."\*

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\* COLQUHOUN on Indigence.



The middle ranks of society in point of worldly circumstances, have largely contributed to the relief of their suffering fellow creatures; and many of them have often injured themselves by kindness to others. But let the rich reflect, as they should be but the stewards of their opulence, when too many possess more of the superfluities of this life, "than they are justly entitled to,"\* when so many die from the want of means of purchasing a dry potato, or of shelter and clothing for their naked bodies; let those who are alluded to, if they be christians, read the 16th Chapter of St. Luke, let them consider, they are but sojourners on earth, and that they are on the eve of visiting another world, where riches avail nothing, and where man shall be judged by his good works in this life, or let them read the accompanying note, containing a short account of a good and great man, whose lamented death†

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\* HANWAY's Letters.

† The late RICHARD REYNOLDS Esq. of Bristol. A public meeting was held at Bristol on Wednesday the 9th October, for the purpose of establishing a Benevolent Institution in commemoration of that eminent philanthropist, the late RICHARD REYNOLDS. The following anecdotes of this good man transpired at the meeting:

A Lady once applied to Mr. REYNOLDS on behalf of an Orphan. After he had given liberally, she said "when he is old enough I will teach him to name and thank his benefactor;" stop said the good man: you mistake, you would not thank the clouds for the rain. Teach him to look

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has largely added within the extended circle of his benevolence, to the multiform distresses of higher and thank *Him* who giveth both the sun and the rain.

Doctor POLE stated that Mr. REYNOLDS made it his constant practice, from religious principle, annually to spend the whole of his income. What his moderate domestic establishment did not require, he disposed of in promoting whatever was useful to society, as well as to lessen the sufferings of the afflicted, without regard to names, sects or parties. At one particular time, said Doctor POLE, he went to a friend in London, acquainting him that he had not that year, spent the whole of his income, and that if he knew of any particular cases claiming charitable relief, he would be glad to be informed of them; this friend communicated to him the distressing situation of a considerable number of persons confined for small debts. What did this humane and generous philanthropist do on this representation? He cleared the whole of their debts; he swept this direful mansion of all its miserable tenants: he opened the prison doors, proclaimed deliverance to the captives, and let the oppressed go free!

Doctor STOCK stated that in 1795, Mr. REYNOLDS addressed a letter to some friends in London, stating the impression made upon his mind by the distresses of the community, and desiring that they would draw upon him for such sums as they might think proper. They complied with his request, and drew, in a very short time, to the extent of *Eleven-thousand pounds*. It appeared however that they had not yet taken due measure of his liberality; for in the course of a few months, he again wrote; stating that his mind was not easy and his coffers still too full. They then drew for *Nine-thousand pounds* more!

Has not the conduct of this lamented Personage been of more real service to his country, than all the acts of the

the times. Fortunately however for Ireland, there exists a character in Dublin, (THOMAS PLEASANTS, Esq.) of as extended philanthropy as ever distinguished the annals of benevolence. Among the numerous acts of his humanity the Meath Hospital stands conspicuous for his munificent bounty. But the miseries of the present period, have attracted the notice of this benevolent inheritor of the virtues of HOWARD, HANWAY and REYNOLDS, "who is so deservedly endeared to his country, not only by his munificence and philanthropy, but by the good sense, with which his generosity is directed to objects of great public utility. He has ordered an edition of Dr. MADDENS, work on the best method of employing the poor, to be reprinted at his own expense.—In speaking of this Gentleman, there is some hazard of falling into adulation; for it is impossible to do him justice without mentioning qualities of head and heart far above the usual standard of human merit; but even at this risk, it is very difficult to repress admiration at a design so greatly disinterested, and so manifestly useful. There are many who feel for poverty,

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most illustrious of our public characters? He has fully proved his firm belief in the Christian faith, and has more efficaciously promoted true Christian charity, than all the arguments of our ablest controvertists. Practice has been added to theory in the whole life of this exalted character, who has raised a monument to his fame more durable than Brass or Marble.

and for the distress of humble industry, with a laudable sensibility—but there are few, if any, who, like Mr. PLEASANTS not only feel, *but act*—and act upon such a scale of succour as cannot fail to circumscribe the regions of distress, and, if duly imitated, to banish unmerited suffering from the poor of the country—few who like him, seem to think themselves but the stewards of their opulence, under their Creator, to administer it in the relief of want, and in the support of the unfortunate.”\* To all rich men may justly said, go and do thou likewise? To the Legislature may be said, that we are arrived at a crisis at which avarice cannot be allowed to hide its treasures, and which their wisdom must now cause to be circulated, to prevent the disorganization of civil society. The writer is aware the representation he makes is strong, but it is alas too well founded in truth, his knowledge of the distress of his native country, and his apprehensions for the dreadful consequences thereof, do not permit him to conceal the truth.

The existence of such evils, ascertained by the most irrefragable evidence, should stimulate us to endeavour to remedy them, “lest (to use the language of an elegant writer) like the lofty tree, proudly spreading its extended branches, displaying its luxuriapt foliage, while a canker

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\* Dublin Correspondent.

is working deeply at the root ; we should be rising, only to fall a more splendid picture of departed greatness." In thus bringing the subject of the poor before the Public, the writer though he has stated painful facts, and deplorable distresses which afflict so large a portion of the community, does not despond, *as there is a prospect of the lower orders being cheered into energy and exertion, by the wisdom of Government, and the hopes that the torpid state of our agricultural industry, will be removed by the animating, liberal, and enlightened conduct of the great landed proprietors.* In many parts of Ireland, the neglected state of the country at present exhibits strong though melancholy proofs of the avaricious conduct or negligence of landlords, who from an anxiety to retain ideal rents, are regardless of their depriving so many labouring Poor of employment, and from this delusive policy they ultimately injure themselves. How different has been the system of that venerable Nobleman, Lord Northland, who has of late been publicly thanked for his conduct among his tenantry. Happy would it be for Ireland, if all her Nobility and Gentry possessed the same patriotic sentiments as this distinguished Character. His philanthropic example will, it is fervently hoped, be followed by many others.

It is much feared that the records of the

Courts in Dublin, will prove if referred to, how very inadequate the Gentry at present are, to afford employment to even one-third of the poor in the country, convinced of this inability, so much to be lamented, the writer of this treatise in his correspondence with the Committee of the House of Commons on Grand Jury Presentments, has submitted a useful plan for the temporary employment of the poor, in the repairs of narrow or cross roads, the most of which have got into a ruinous, or almost an impassible state for carriages, particularly in the South of Ireland; where the Grand Jury Presentments, have within these few years been generally applied to Mail Coach Roads, many of which, reflect no credit on the judgment or economy of the projectors. An attentive perusal of the Parliamentary Debates of last Session, must convince the Public of the dangers to be apprehended from an unemployed population. Of this Ireland has had already melancholy and heart rending proofs: it has been chiefly owing to the want of employment, that the lower classes have yielded to the machinations of the seditious and ill disposed. It is therefore the most urgent duty of every loyal subject to give every possible employment to the labouring poor. The safety of their lives and properties mainly depend on their liberality in this respect. It is an old saying that "neces-

sity has no law" and the wretch who feels himself and family pinched with hunger and exposed in rags, or almost without them, to the inclemency of seasons, is in some degree excusable in pilfering from his oppressors, the means of scanty and temporary relief. When the situation of the poor has been bettered, their thieving has been uniformly found to diminish; render their circumstances comfortable, it will entirely disappear.\*

The habitual drunkenness of the lower orders, has been often urged as one of the causes of their misfortunes. This is an undeniable fact, but those that are acquainted with the physical defects of mankind admit, that "the misery and idleness occasioned by poverty and oppression united, is a principal source of the prevalent tendency to ebriety, and the consequent riotous feuds so remarkable among the Irish. Drunkenness is the solace of misery, the resource of idleness, the great pleasure of the uncivilized in every quarter of the world. Habit and example confirm and extend a practice so destructive: but as general wealth increases, and as industry and civilization become diffused, it is gradually diminished, and, as a national stigma at length effaced, "as an ignorant population are never happy, so a poor population never possess the

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\* Crump on the Employment of the People; Page 208.

virtue of sobriety, as they will almost go naked sooner than refrain from the use of spirits.

As employment in objects of national utility, would be the main source of restoring society to happiness and content, for "the liberal reward of labour, as it encourages the propagation, so it encreases the industry of the common people." In this view of the population of Ireland, the writer conceived that every suggestion that could have a tendency to promote this employment would be productive of good, suggested to some highly respectable Naval acquaintances, the propriety of submitting the appropriation of a part of the Parliamentary grant for a monument to commemorate our Victories, which was made so many years since, immediately after the Battle of Trafalgar, to be expended in Ireland. As the disposal of this large sum has been deferred perhaps fortunately, until the ensuing Session of Parliament; probably the claims of Ireland on British liberality may not be disregarded. The Parliamentary Grant alluded to, was intended to be disposed of in a National Monument, where posterity could derive no benefit, and which would be only gratifying to fleeting vanity. Some benevolent Members of the House of Commons proposed that this grant should be disposed of in the erection and establishment of an Asylum for the Widows and Orphans of



our Brave Heroes, who have fought and bled for their Country. In this highly laudable suggestion, the Government appeared cordially to coincide, and its ultimate disposal was wisely deferred for maturer deliberation. Great Britain already possesses at Greenwich and Chelsea her proudest Monument of national glory and gratitude. To those wise and laudable institutions, Ireland has largely contributed by her wealth, as she has already done by her blood and treasure, to uphold and support the British Empire. United national benevolence has granted to Ireland the noble Hospital at Kilmainham, and why may not Ireland possess an institution similar to Greenwich. The money for a National object, is now at the disposal of a liberal Government, so that the main difficulty is obviated. The funds for its annual maintenance, may well be spared from the immense income of Greenwich Hospital. This establishment would consequently be proportionably reduced in its expenditure, while the cheapness of provisions in Ireland, compared to the vicinity of the metropolis, would largely add to the economy and wisdom of the measure. The introduction of this subject by Government into Parliament, would be the best proof of its generous feeling towards this Country, it would strengthen the Bonds of union which now so happily exist,

and it would stifle the clamour which has hitherto existed against the novercal principles of Great Britain. It would be an act of justice to the living, and of gratitude to the dead. In a Naval Asylum established in Ireland, the education of the Orphans of Seamen and Soldiers may be laudably embraced, and the records of our Brave Heroes animating the aspiring minds of their descendants, through the influence of their glorious example, would stimulate the young to become like them, the future defenders of their Country. The Government and the Legislator appear well inclined to act on this principle, but whether with a generous regard to Ireland's wants, remains to be developed. The Military may probably take umbrage at this disposal; if so, let the grant be divided, half of it would be ample for the exclusive purpose of a Naval Asylum in Ireland; the erection of which would animate the Country by the employment of so many hundreds of our starving poor. The circulation of the money expended in the Buildings in the South of Ireland, the peculiar situation for Naval objects, would afford great scope for the temporary employment of the poor. While the Irish Seaman who has served his King and Country would be cheered by this rising monument of National liberality. The British Empire has derived all the glory that could be expected

from the wisdom of its Councils, and the brilliant success of its arms ; but the period has arrived, when it has a duty of an equally important nature to perform, and of glory as imperishable as the victories of Trafalgar or Waterloo, of more permanent utility to the welfare, and ultimate security of Society, a duty which we are commanded by God and our Saviour *to perform in feeding the hungry and clothing the naked*, "and which we should do with a due sense of the vanity of all human things, a monitory consciousness, that in a few fleeting days our own graves will be pressed by the beggars foot."\*

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\* From the Correspondent Newspaper of 15th November 1816, which has also most appropriately remarked that "the existing distress needs no fictitious enlargement. It is sufficiently severe to rouse Charity and Benevolence to redoubled effort. The winter has set in with unusual violence—with storm, frost, and snow ; food is not abundant, nor is it accessible to poverty as it usually is—this is all that men have to do with—to feel what their duty requires them to do, towards their fellow creatures. The flagellations of politics are bad provocatives to charity.

We are as a people, troubled, certainly by a concurrence of difficulties ; but we are not deeply nor durably distressed. We are perplexed a little—but we have no cause for despair, neither do we despair. We are cast down a little—but no ruin is about to steal upon us. *A retrenchment of those superfluities from the tables of the comparatively opulent, which would rather improve comfort than diminish indulgence, and the fruits of such retrenchment consigned to charity, would cause those to be*

The distresses of the poor of Ireland are beyond the means of the resident gentry to relieve, whose prospects have been lately so clouded, and whose perplexities are daily increas-

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*clothed who shiver under the winter breath, and would also give food enough to satisfy those who are hungry and fasting.* Let us have one season of pause from the war of parties; and whilst we are ready to tear each other to pieces, to shew our regard for Religion, let us shew that we have a little of its good influences acting upon our hearts, by giving up ourselves to the practice of Charity, by promoting the cause of Charity, undisgraced by trick or revilement, for a little time—ever so little.

“He that would die well and happily,” says a good divine and an incomparable writer, “must in his lifetime, according to all his capacities, exercise *charity*; and because religion is the life of the soul, and *charity* is the life of religion, the same which gives life to the better part of man which never dies, may obtain of God a mercy to the inferior part of man in the day of its dissolution. Charity is the great channel through which God passes all his mercy on mankind—for we receive absolution of our sins in proportion to our forgiving our brother. This is the rule of our hopes, and the measure of our desire of this world; and in the day of death and judgment, *the great sentence upon mankind shall be transacted according to our alms, which is the other part of Charity.*”

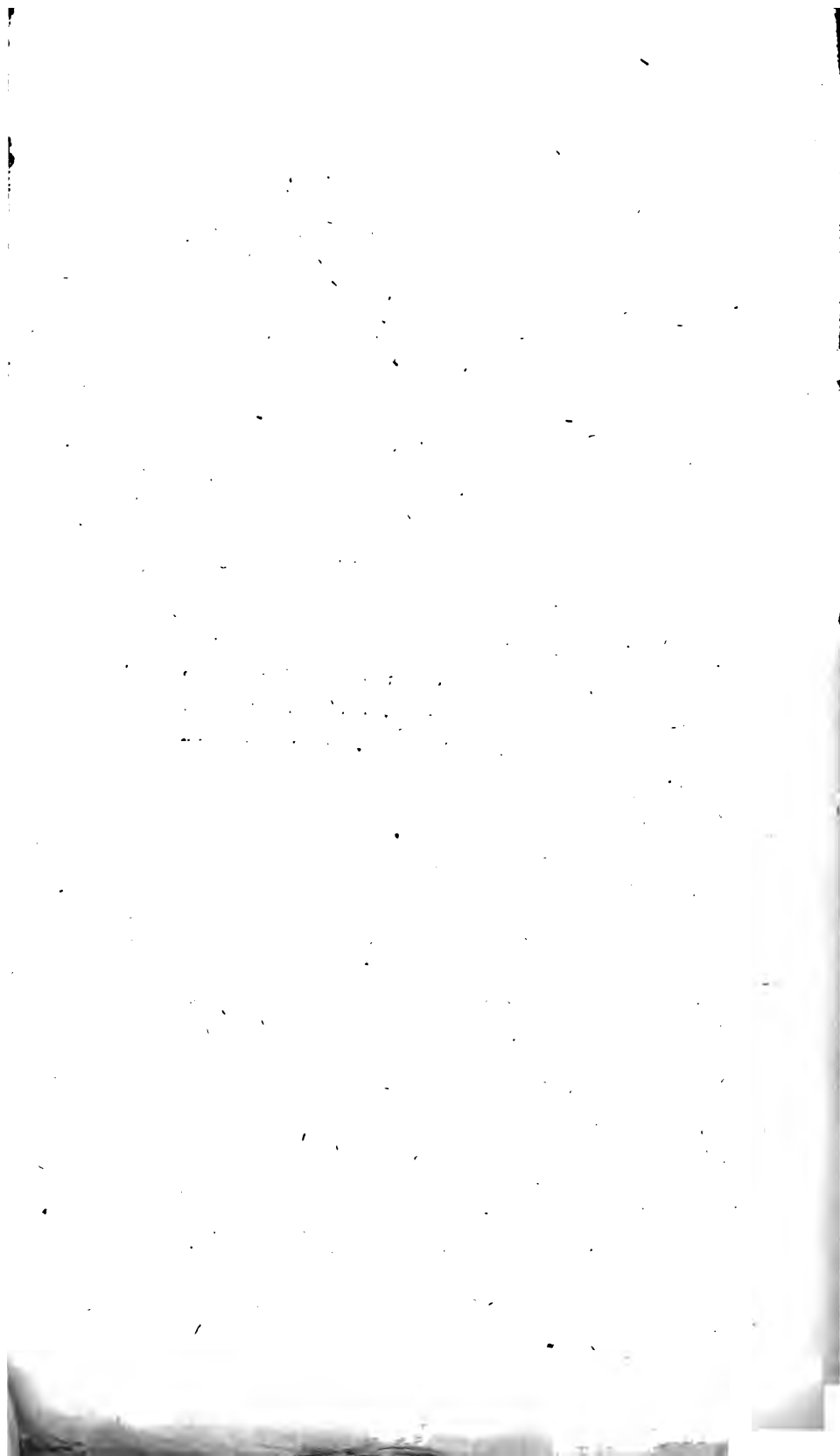
The writer of this treatise regrets that he knows few instances where the really rich have retrenched, in order to be better able to relieve the miseries of their fellow creatures. It would be charitable their doing so, but the sixteenth Chapter of St. Luke is he fears seldom read by them, or if read, considered in that serious light, intended

ing. Therefore this relief must proceed from the wisdom of the Legislature to which illustrious body the writer has in this treatise humbly submitted effectual and tangible resources for this laudable purpose. The operation of which will most probably add to the strength of the Country, to the improvement of its finances, and to the promotion of morality and virtue.

If we as a Christian Nation have a regard to futurity, and if *Religion* that bond of *Peace* be not disregarded among us, the state of the Irish Poor must be the immediate and serious object of Parliamentary consideration.

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by our Saviour for the instruction of mankind. Let them reflect "that their graves will in a few fleeting days be pressed by the beggars foot." And of what little use all their past splendour will be, when they are to render an account of their works in this life.



# APPENDIX.

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*English Schools of Private Foundation,*  
DIOCESE OF CORK AND ROSS.

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## BLUE COAT HOSPITAL.

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This Endowment was founded in or about the year 1699, by Doctpr EDWARD WORTH, Bishop of Killaloe: The following is the information which we have received respecting it. Some time previous to his death, Doctor WORTH executed a Deed to WILLIAM GODDARD, Mayor of the Staple of Cork, and WILLIAM ANDREWS and JONATHAN PERRY, the then Constables of Cork; by which Deed he vested in them and their Successors for ever, the Lands known by the name of the Little Spital Fields in the South Liberties of Cork, and also the Lands of Chapel East and Chapel West, Ballynought, and Cahirgall in the North Liberties of Cork, subject to a head-rent of twenty pounds per annum to Doctor WORTH and his heirs. By this Deed the Mayor and Corporation were bound to erect a commodious School-house on said Lands, to be called St. Stephen's Hospital, and therein to educate as

many Boys of the Protestant Religion as the Funds would maintain; that the Mayor and Corporation of Cork were to have the government and power of visiting the School, and making rules for its administration, and that they were to let Leases of only twenty-one years of the lands called the Spital Fields, taking half a year's rent as a Fine! Said Fines to be converted only to the use and maintenance of said School or Hospital; that the other part of the Lands belonging to the Endowment, East and West Ballynought, &c. &c. were to be leased at twenty-one years, at the best improved yearly rent, the rents to be expended in the maintenance and support of the School; that also four Students in Trinity College, who must be natives of the City of Cork, in preference to all others, should receive 20*l.* per annum as exhibitions, and that the Bishop of Cork, the Mayor of Ditto, the Provost of the College of Dublin, and the Heir of the Worth Family, should nominate the Students; that the other Scholars were to be apprenticed to Trades. Such is the account which we have received of the contents of this Deed; the original we have not seen, nor have we been able to obtain a Copy of it: the Lands therein granted to this Charity, produce now, if our information be correct, from five to six thousand pounds per annum.



We are also informed, that in or about the year 1707, these Lands were *leased for ever* at the annual rent of 457*l.* 16*s.* per annum, by the then Mayor and Corporation of Cork, under a second Deed, but whether executed by Doctor WORTH, or by his brother, our information does not specify ; but it states, that in the making these *Leases for ever*, the then Mayor and Corporation of Cork attended more to the advantages of their friends, to whom they let the Lands, than to the Interests of the Foundation, for which they were Trustees.

Under all the circumstances of this case, as represented to us, we have thought it our duty to refer the further investigation of it to the Board of Charitable Donations and Bequests, who have powers to sue for the recovery of Charities cancelled, embezzled or misapplied ; we have reason to think that without great difficulties and delays we could not obtain the accurate information respecting this Charity which we would desire ; and though the information which we have detailed above, was given to us, with the reserve, that it was collected from report and conversation, and might not be accurate, still we thought it our duty, by referring the subject to the Board of Charitable Donations, to put it into such a strain of inquiry, that if it should be found that the property of this Charity has been improperly demised, it may be sued for,

recovered, and applied according to the original intentions of Doctor WORTH.\*

There is a very spacious School belonging to this Foundation, in which as many Boys as the present income will maintain, 20 or 25, are lodg-

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\* WILLIAM HENRY WORTH NEWENHAM, Esq. of Coolmore, has shown the writer of this treatise, the counterpart of the original grant of the WORTH Estates, dated the 2nd September 1693, from the Hon. WILLIAM WORTH, to the Trustees of the Blue Coat Hospital in Cork, which deed strictly limits the extent of the leases to be made for twenty-one years only. Doctor WORTH it appears had not the power to execute this deed, but his Son after his decease fulfilled the intentions of his benevolent Father. How Leases in perpetuity came to be made by the Trustees, under this demise remains to be accounted for. Mr. NEWENHAM has no clue to such a transaction. If the property in question belonged to any private Individual, he would find no difficulty in bringing ejectments on the title. But the interests of the poor and unprotected, are never preserved with that zeal, and industry, which are attached to the concerns of Individuals. However, immense expenditure on this Estate has made it most valuable, and it would be cruel to deprive so many unoffending persons of the properties which they have acquired on it, from their own industry, or the industry of their ancestors. The income of this property would considerably exceed 12,000*l.* per annum.

At a late meeting for the relief of the Poor of Limerick, it was stated that the funds of the Charities in that City were not properly applied. From every quarter of Ireland, and from the perusal of the Parliamentary Reports, there are ample proofs of the necessity of a Commission to rectify these notorious evils.

ed, clothed, dieted and educated, and receive a better kind of education than what is usually given at Charity Schools: they are mostly the Sons of decayed Citizens of Cork, and are recommended for admission by the Members of the Corporation.

### THE GREEN COAT HOSPITAL IN THE CITY OF CORK.

This School was endowed by several persons at different periods, with Lands, Donations and Bequests, the Income of which now amounts altogether to the sum of 134*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.* Of this sum about forty pounds is paid to the Master and Mistress and their Assistants; the remainder of the fund is devoted to clothing the Children, and maintaining from 16 to 18 reduced old persons on the Establishment. There were 52 Children educated at this School within this year, of which number 40 remained on the Establishment the 25th December 1810. This is represented to us as a very well-regulated Charity. A part of the Income of this Endowment, which arises from Lands, we are informed will soon rise very considerably.

### DEANE'S CHARITY SCHOOL.

Moses DEANE, Esq. in year 1726, left a concern in Cock-pit Lane, in the City of Cork, worth

about 136*l.* per annum yearly, with directions that the said yearly rent should be put out to interest, for the purpose (*inter alia*) of raising the sum of 1,200*l.* each, for the support of four Schools in the City of Cork, for educating and clothing twenty Boys and twenty Girls in each School. The interest of the Charity in the concerns in Cock-pit Lane, has expired about ten years since. There has but been one School established which is in St. Peter's Parish: Mr. FRENCH of Marino, the representative of the family, some years ago paid, as we are informed, into the hands of the Rector\* of St. Nicholas Parish 1,200*l.* which is now in the Funds, and has accumulated to 2,750*l.* The Parishes of Christ Church and St. Mary's Shandon have not received their proportions, and have lately applied to the Commissioners of Charitable Donations for their interference

There are at present twenty-five Boys and twenty-five Girls in this School, who are clothed

\* The Reverend JOHN FORTESCUE, the present Rector of St. Nicholas, has the trust of this money, which at present amounts to 3,800*l.* and which is annually accumulating, as the interest is not applied to the expenses of the Charity. Any further comment by the writer on our Public institutions would be foreign to the object of this publication, but sufficient has been shown for a more minute investigation than has been yet instituted, as the information which was obtained by the Board of Education, was by no means minutely correct.



